PATHS THAT CROSS

ZIMMERMAN

SECOND EDITION

William Zimmerman

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JANET MORTON.

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PATHS THAT CROSS

BY THE

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"How to be Happy when Married"
"Pearls of Comfort from Tennyson's 'In Memoriam'"
"The Little Grave"
"Daily Bread for Daily Hunger"
and "Sunshine"

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AT HOME

CHAPTER I.

O that ideal is shattered, another illusion dispelled, another hope gone. I wonder if it is woman's lot always to be disappointed, always to be cast down? It seems so, and yet they don't deserve it; some may, of course, but these womanly women, whom even the worst men are compelled by very contrast to respect, I am sure they are deserving of better things."

Thus exclaimed Janet Morton, as she bade farewell to Gordon Ronaldson at a summer hotel in the mountains. Janet was a girl of exceptional ability, gentle and winning in disposition, having naturally many admirers.

Added to her goodness and talent were the charms of a beautiful face and form.

But Janet's beauty did not destroy her good judgment. Among her many courtiers in early life, this same Mr. Ronaldson had appeared. At that time he was a young man of the world. Janet refused his offer of love; yet, detecting in him the rough

ashlar of character, which is capable of taking on a fine and noble polish, she turned to her wooer and counselled him to abandon the life he was living and try instead the life of the upright, and by very contrast draw his own conclusions.

"Why, Janet, I am not debased," said Gordon. "I have never wronged any person, I neither cheat, lie nor steal. I am an honest citizen and no one can come forward to say I ever wronged him to the extent of a single penny."

For a moment Janet sat apparently in deep thought, and then said:

"I scarcely know what more to say to you, Gordon, for if I say to you what I think, I shall perhaps offend you; and if I do not say what I think, then in after years you may condemn me for failure to improve an opportunity. However, if you will bear with me as with a friend, I will give you a friend's advice."

"Do you think I need any special advice?" asked Gordon, with an air of apparent independence.

"From the manner in which you answer me, one would not reasonably suppose that you yourself were desirous of another's interest in your behalf. In fact, few persons are willing to confess weakness or the lack of understanding. I know lots of men who confess they are timid, but none think them-

selves foolish. It is indeed very difficult to find a man who will acknowledge he is intemperate in his habits, that he is at all envious or unkind. There are multitudes, however, who confess they are unselfish, generous, and full of compassion."

"If you feel it your duty to advise, I shall humbly listen to you. Perhaps you may tell me something I don't know."

"Yes, Gordon, for while you say you have never wronged any one, you seem to forget that there is one person at least to whom you are doing harm, and that is Gordon Ronaldson. Unhappily, there are many like yourself, Gordon, who, if found fault with, fall back upon the argument that they have never wronged anybody, when at the same time they are daily robbing themselves of both health and wealth."

"But may they not be having a good time?" asked Gordon.

"It depends upon what men call a 'good time.' We must make the best use we can of the things which are in our power, and that man is wise who, wishing to live a life free from sorrow, will stop and think of what is as sure to happen as if it had already happened."

"And yet isn't it foolish to cross the bridge before we come to it?"

"It is well, however, Gordon, to consider the danger before crossing. Just as impor-

tant as are a pilot and wind for making a good voyage, so important are reason and art for the achievement of success and happiness. Man has the power of understanding, but unless there be the proper use of his faculties, he will never attain his proper end."

"Life in many respects is for man a constant struggle. One feels almost like envying the lower orders of creation, who, while they take no thought for the morrow, always seem perfectly happy."

"Ah, yes, Gordon. But you must remember that God intended man to have dominion over the fowls of the air. Man has been introduced into this world not only to be an admirer of the works of God, but also to be an interpreter of them. Surely, therefore, no man would want to begin and end on a level with irrational animals. The cold marble block in the hands of the sculptor may be so beautifully carved as to present to the spectator a work of art lacking only a soul, that man turns to, like the sculptor of old, and says, 'Speak.' But in God's creation of man He has a work of art that has in it a living soul, designed for a living purpose. You are therefore required of God not only to preserve that divine work of art properly, but also to use it for the glory of others. In other words, Gordon,

your influence over others will be to them either a blessing or a curse."

These last words seemed to come to Gordon with an emphasis that told of the force of her argument. When she appealed to his manhood he realized that he possessed powers that were not exercised, and, as regards his influence, he was made aware of its power, even though he seemed unconscious of its work. With a look that told of an honest confession he said, "Janet, I never before thought of my influence over others, strange as it may seem to you. Indeed, it would be intolerable to me to think I had wronged another by my example."

"I am glad your eyes are being opened to the truth, for you know, Gordon, influence is a power for good or evil. A single word we may say or an act we may do, may turn the destiny of an individual. Influence is a thing that lives on a long time after its creation, and the influence of an hour may tell for eternity, not only for self, but also for another's happiness or remorse. The 'arrow shot into the air,' or the song breathed into it, will both be found again, even though many years may have passed away."

"But, Janet, do you think I have any such influence?"

"You are a man of intelligence and ability, and hence have greater influence than

many others; why not use your gifts for wise purposes, instead of wasting your precious hours by indulging in worldly dissipation? Then in after years your influence will be a blessing instead of a curse."

"Oh, there is plenty of time yet for such goodness."

"Gordon, have you never watched the hour-glass, an emblem of human life? How swiftly the sands run, and yet so silently that they are not heard! In fact, the little particles pass away so imperceptibly that the naked eye can scarcely discern the glass that is being emptied, and yet in the short space of an hour the glass is entirely exhausted. Like the sands in the hour-glass, so the hours of your life are quietly, but surely, passing away, nor can you ever recall them, for they are going forever."

Her words came to Gordon with a power for which he could not account. He was reminded of a particular time in life when, under peculiar conditions, he had been brought from darkness to light, and had been told of the havoc the scythe of time makes among the human race, gathering us into the land where our fathers have gone before us. Being similarly affected now, Gordon accordingly seemed anxious to receive light, and was willing to follow the advice of one who appeared to him a friend, even a sister.

It was the first time a young woman had ever taken enough interest in him to consider his welfare.

"Janet," he asked, "why is it that you appear so interested in my behalf, for you seem to be more concerned about me than I have ever been about myself?"

"I can hardly help it, Gordon. It is natural to care what our friends are and become, and I am sure if I had a brother I should bless any woman who would help him and give him sisterly counsel."

Gordon felt that he had truly discovered in Janet a rich prize, but the question with him was, how should he win it? He had in him that which enabled him to see the good traits of others, even though he lacked them himself. Attracted, as we all are, by that which was the very opposite of his own nature, he was the more eager to claim the heart of one who he believed would be the essential factor for his future success and happiness.

Having discovered wherein his weakness as a wooer for her hand lay, and acting upon the advice of Janet, for he now saw the folly of his way of living, Gordon at once began a change of life.

"I have tried this kind of a life," said he to himself, "for a number of years, and there is nothing in it worth a man's time and money."

Accordingly, the first thing Gordon did was to forsake the club. But he must not only cease to do evil, he must also learn to do good, if he would approach Janet as one of her own kind.

One Sunday morning, as Gordon was passing a church, he heard a familiar tune. He had not been inside a church for years, yet that hymn seemed to carry him back to his childhood days, when he was a faithful scholar in the Sunday school. He was at the same time reminded of his mother, who on her death-bed warned him not to be led astray by evil associates, but to live so as to bring honor upon his parents' name. Like a flash all these thoughts passed through the mind of Gordon as he stood on the pavement outside of the church that Sunday morning. He vividly recalled the time when his own dear mother had taken him, a mere babe, and taught him to pray. Scarcely had he learned to speak before he had been taught to kneel by his little bed morning and night and there lift up his voice to God. For a long time he seemed to have forgotten a mother's teaching, yet now the early home life rose up vividly before him.

He entered the outer door and stood in the vestibule of the church. The congregation swept in by him. No one noticed him. Even the sexton looked at him askance. He

saw he was not particularly wanted there, and so he walked away. Near by was another church, and he resolved to worship there if things proved at all inviting. As he was standing in the vestibule, a gentleman came up to him, took him by the hand, and pleasantly asked him if he would not like a seat. To his timid response, the gentleman said, "Come with me." And Gordon found himself following the gentleman up the main aisle and into a conspicuous pew. The hymn book was handed him. He was shown courteous attention. It was no wonder Gordon thought the services and sermon very interesting. After the benediction had been pronounced and the congregation dismissed, the gentleman said to him, "I hope you have sufficiently enjoyed our services to return again." "Thank you very kindly," replied Gordon, "I shall only be too happy to do so." And it was only natural for him to become a regular attendant at that church. He was made to feel so much at home there that he soon forgot the pleasures of the world in his appreciation of the joys of the church. Said Gordon to Janet, "I never before knew there could be real enjoyment in doing good; and there are no regrets to follow."

"No, Gordon, I am sure that when once you look at life in a more practical manner you will discover in it so much that is really

inspiring for a young man. Indeed, I sometimes envy young men for the many opportunities that lie before them."

"Well, so far as opportunities are concerned, they are not as plentiful as perhaps you think," replied Gordon.

"Oh, yes they are. Of course one must look for them, and when found he must seize them with a determination to make the best of them."

"But what is a young man with a humble start in so great a world as this?"

"He is a great deal, Gordon. Look at many of the great men of to-day. Who were they? At one time they were a great deal worse off than you are."

We are apt to forget that the Washingtons, the Jeffersons, the Clays, and the Websters of a nation are not yet all dead. But if genius will bring forth her honors, if art will hang out her trophies, if science will leave her monuments, if literature will strew her jewels, then there must be, as of old, a consecrated effort on the part of man. We err when we look at men as they are to-day, without stopping to consider what they were when they first began life.

"But times have materially changed, and there are not the same opportunities to-day there were years ago," replied Gordon.

"That may all be very true, and yet it is an undisputed fact that some men to-day

are doing just as great things as were done years ago by man. While times have changed, so have conditions, and although some opportunities have gone never more to return, nevertheless, new ones have arisen. I sometimes think it is a mistake of our present times to speak so much of the lack of opportunities, for the cry has gone so far abroad across the land, that many seem to think there is no use of making any effort to succeed. Indeed, we have lived in an atmosphere of gloom too long, and the number of complainers abroad is very great."

"That is very true, Janet, for I know from my own personal experience that such complaints only tend to make one all the more discontented with life in general, and instead of settling down to earnest work, one is tempted to become more or less indifferent. After all, it were better to take hold in earnest and determine to make something out of even the little."

"Yes, Gordon, and that would not only perhaps lead up to something greater, but at the same time be a check against yielding to many of the temptations of life which only destroy man's powers for the grasping of opportunities. Many in their discouragement have given up in disgust, some even putting an end to their lives, when perhaps by holding on just a little longer

they might have been brought forward into conditions of success and happiness."

"Many men can appreciate that fact, Janet," said Gordon, with a nod of the head, as if giving hearty assent to what she had just said. "The trouble with many men," he continued, "is they lose a position and for a time are out of employment. They begin to worry, and to drown their sorrow they take to drink. This unfits them for the seizing of opportunities when they are presented. They keep on with the cup until at last they are chained to the evil habit of strong drink, and have lost all desire for anything else."

"I feel very sorry for such men, Gordon, for many of them have families who are made to suffer thereby. And, too, I feel sorry for such men themselves, for many of them are men who at one time were men of influence and held in high esteem. Their future was bright and it seemed they could do so much good not only to their own families, but even to society at large."

"They are indeed deserving of much sympathy, for many of them at one time were courted by men in large numbers, but now they are almost friendless."

"Gordon, that reminds me of a poem."

"Can you recite it?" asked Gordon.

"Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone—
For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,
But has trouble enough of its own.
Sing, and the hills will answer;
Sigh, it is lost on the air—
The echoes bound to a joyful sound,
But shrink from voicing care.

Rejoice, and men will seek you;
Grieve, and they turn and go.
They want full measure of all your pleasure,
But they do not need your woe.
Be glad, and your friends are many;
Be sad, and you lose them all.
There are none to decline your nectared wine,
But alone you must drink life's gall.

Feast, and your halls are crowded,
Fast, and the world goes by.
Succeed and give, and it helps you to live,
But no man can help you die.
There is room in the halls of pleasure
For a large and lordly train,
But one by one we must all file on
Through the narrow aisles of pain."

"Many have learned from sad experience how true those words are," said Gordon.

"This is why I am so anxious that you, Gordon, should never have such an experience, and if you will profit by that which is intended to be kindness on my part, you may some day appreciate what may now appear just a little severe."

"But, Janet, this is a time when people seem to be so heartless to each other."

"In what way?"

"I mean to say they have no interest in another's welfare and success, but rather try to tear down his business prospects."

"That is only natural, for each one tries to succeed for himself; still, there are many who rejoice in the success of others and even help them. A man must therefore not stop to consider what others may say about him, so long as he is doing that which is right, but concentrate all his energies toward honorable success. It is to such a man's credit to be envied. Of course, some men try hard and yet fail."

"That is what I cannot understand," replied Gordon.

"To what have you special reference?"

"The fact that some men succeed, while others who have striven just as hard have failed."

"Perhaps they have not gone about it in the same manner. You know, Gordon, it depends largely upon the way in which a thing is done as to the success that will follow. Some men lack good judgment, and others are so very surly that they would only drive away such as would otherwise deal with them. A man's manner has much to do with his success, for when the shell is so very rough it is difficult to persuade

the world that there is a precious kernel within. Courtesy is to a man what beauty is to a woman."

Janet had frequently reminded him of the intellectual ability he possessed, if only he would studiously apply himself, but it had seemed as if her words were in vain. In reality they carried with them great power. As water, which has been over the fire without the least movement, suddenly begins to bubble up and boil, so for a long time Gordon appeared unmoved by the words of Janet. Yet all the while a change was taking place preparatory to the real action.

"Because," said Janet, "of the very condition of 'old age,' it is frequently spoken of as the 'evil day,' for then opportunities are largely in the past and the race near its close. That is not the time first to begin to think about running the race of life, but rather the time when man might be able, after having run well in youth, to sit down and rest and quietly enjoy the fruits of past labors. Youth is the time when every one should be up and doing. Our noblest men and women have all learned from their own experience what it is to be engaged in business of some kind. It is not specially to the credit of any one to squander his time in idleness. Walking about the streets idly watching others earn their bread by the

sweat of their brow is neither helpful to a nation, nor to the community in which such persons may happen to live. Every one who has health and opportunity should do something. If not compelled to do so from happy circumstances, then let such do something for the good of others."

"No doubt there are many such opportunities."

"Yes, and, Gordon, you know there are a great many young men in every city who do nothing, yet are always neatly dressed and can be found standing on the street corners like fashion plates. These men not only idle away their own time, but they call in the forenoon, afternoon and evening upon ladies, often to the mortification and disgust of the latter. One naturally wonders where they get the money necessary for such a life of idleness."

"Well, that would no doubt be a question for many to answer."

"Yes, Gordon, and some of that very class of men seem to have but little consideration for the ladies on whom they call. When a young girl is yet in her 'teens' they are very attentive to her so far as enjoying her company is concerned, but they spend very little money to add to her enjoyment. Meantime, it is whispered around that an engagement has taken place, and sometimes it being a girl's first engagement she unfor-

tunately helps to advertise the announcement. Other gentlemen naturally keep more or less shy of her. At last, when the girl has wasted several years with such a man, she finds herself duped. Unable to support her, the man breaks off the engagement and the young woman is the one to suffer."

"You are about right, Janet, for in the eyes of the world the man is the same as he always was, but the woman is laughed at by others less unfortunate."

"Yes, and I blame many young girls for having anything to do with such men. It makes me feel sorry whenever I see such men forcing their company upon the unwary and inexperienced. They may mean well, but they are doing an injustice to the girl, depriving her of other opportunities."

"There is no question whatever about that," answered Gordon. "In fact," he continued, "I have always regarded it an injustice for young men to consider only their own pleasure without regard for the young woman's future life."

"You had a sister, and that is why you have been more conscientious than many others."

"No doubt that had a great deal to do with my actions towards others, for I believe in the 'Golden Rule.' However, Janet, I must confess that I never before looked

at this in so serious a manner, and yet it is a matter of concern worthy of the calm consideration of many young men."

"There are men, Gordon, who, squandering their time in idleness, are, like Grotius, forced to cry out: 'Oh, how many years have I wasted in laboriously doing nothing!' Knowledge and opportunities, together with all of our talents, unless made over into character, are nothing more than a plague to their possessor. It was, I believe, Byron who wrote on his thirty-third birthday—

> 'Through life's dull road, so dim and dirty,
> I have dragged to three and thirty.
> What have these years left to me?
> Nothing—except thirty-three.'

Many, like him, have traveled along life's journey until they have passed by many milestones, but as for themselves, they have never made a mark worthy of the consideration of those who follow. All that can be said of them is, 'They live. Some day they'll die. They'll never be missed, for they've never truly lived.' A fitting epitaph for their graves would be, 'Gone and Forgotten.'"

"Janet, that is pretty severe," interjected Gordon.

"And yet is it not true?"

Gordon paused for a moment, as if to consider the question, when, looking into her

face, he said, "Well, Janet, you are about correct. At first your words appeared harsh, but I believe they are wisely spoken, and many young men might profit by them. Unfortunately, we young men are too often encouraged in the wrong, and not admonished enough to do the right, and perhaps for this reason I at first thought you severe."

"Gordon, I don't mean to be unkind, nor even severe, only we are speaking about some things that need correcting, and I sincerely believe that idleness is not becoming a healthy young man.

"Money is so very uncertain that it is like a bird in the hand; you can't tell when it will fly away. Many once rich men are to-day penniless, and without any knowledge of how to earn an honest living, they are among the poorest of the poor. It is well for all persons to 'learn to bear the burden in youth.' It is far better to work hard while young and by prudent economy lay aside for 'the rainy day,' than to squander away the precious days of youth and in old age have to start life over again from the very beginning."

"Yes, Janet, there is no doubt but that it is much easier to bear the burden in youth than in old age."

" Then, too, Gordon, it is the secret of much of the happiness or unhappiness of

life. Many of our young people marry with legacies of rich parents lying in their laps. Life starts out very smoothly and continues so as long as the money lasts, but when once all is spent, then come the hardships of life. With no knowledge of how money is honestly earned, and no experience along the lines of industry, want soon enters the front door, while love flies out at the back. Into such a home discord sooner or later enters and often separation follows."

"Yes, poverty often drives away love."

"The ounce of prevention, therefore, is worth the pound of cure, and in no other respect is this fact truer than in the importance of early redeeming the time. In fact we owe it to our fellow-men; for when we came into this world, we fell heir to everything that could make life happy and successful, and when we leave this world it should be better because we lived in it. We owe something to those who will come after us; and instead of the world owing us a living and a good time, as many seem to argue, we owe the world something. We owe it our time and talents for the betterment of humanity and for the honor of our own names. Such redeeming of the time will result in the future happiness of many lives, and a home built up from such material will be a home indeed, where the trials of life will not be able to sever, but

only to bind closer, the hearts of those that love.

"Industrious men," added Janet, "never grow weary in their toils for 'Home, sweet home,' but are truest to it when most tried."

"Do all young ladies think so seriously of life and the home?" asked Gordon, rather curiously.

"I fear many do not. In fact, I often feel sorry for the young girl just graduated from school."

"Why so?"

"Because many such are fascinated by the attentions of men of the world, and nothing can persuade them that their friends are not the noblest lovers. But what do many know of the secret of the lives of such gallant gentlemen? They may read the story of excess and evil courses written on the bleared eyes, but they cannot understand the meaning. They hear a whisper of prodigality or scandal, but love is blind and deaf to faults. Such girls, therefore, often act most unwisely. The wedding festivities are followed, perhaps, by a few weeks of soft sentiments and new gowns. But then the truth begins to dawn, and the eyes of many a poor unfortunate young woman have opened to the inevitable sequel. Neglect, followed by angry words and curses, becomes the order of the day. The diamond ring and other jewelry

are sold to meet demanding bills. That Venus-like neck, of which at one time he could not say too many pretty things, has now an ugly bruise upon it. The footsteps which at one time sent joy to a happy soul, now only awaken a feeling of terror as the husband, crazed with drink, comes cursing into the home. The sequel often is one of two things—divorce or suicide."

As Gordon listened to Janet's remarks upon a rather delicate subject so far as his own experience was concerned, he appeared just a little ruffled. Although he had always been an honorable young man, nevertheless he was in many respects unwise and thoughtless, and he was conscious of the fact that his life had up to this been tending downwards.

Laying aside a small book which he had held in his hand, he turned and said, "Janet, one might easily take offense at your remarks, but the more I think over what you have said, the more force I see in your words. The trouble with most ladies is they are afraid to tell us of our faults for fear of giving offense, and many no doubt would be offended. But such as have tried for a time the things you condemn, must, to be honest, agree with you. I will therefore compliment myself upon being considered worthy of your thoughful consideration in my behalf."

"I am glad you have not misunderstood me," said Janet, with a look that told Gordon she had not spoken to him merely for the sake of being heard. And then with a sweet smile that came as a warm ray of sunshine from behind a dark cloud, she added, "A stroke sometimes reveals a hidden treasure."

"Thank you, I hope you have found one by yours."

"I have, for your own lips have revealed that which is complimentary to you."

"In what way?"

"In your admission of that which is right," replied Janet.

"I hope I shall not disappoint you. I will try not to, at least."

"I have great expectations, Gordon, for your future."

This seemed to awaken within him new desires and ambition, and he said, "Janet, your expectations shall be realized so far at it lies in my power, and unless you are already too rich in friends, I shall be glad to subscribe myself one of that number, for I perceive your friendship would be helpful to me."

"Why, certainly, Gordon," she replied, in an off-hand manner, "we are friends. There's no reason why we should not be."

These last words seemed to touch the better nature of Gordon, and reflecting a mo-

ment, he said, "Janet, I hope that before long I shall be able to surprise you, for you have appealed to my honor, and while hitherto I have always loved worldly pleasures, your words fill me with a desire to live a better life. I no doubt have not left as fair an impression with you as perhaps others, but it is to be hoped I can even now do so. There is always one redeeming trait in every character, and it is to be hoped I possess at least that one."

Not long afterward he received a position as clerk in a bank, where in a very short time he won the confidence and esteem of those above him. His salary was at first small, still he was now honorably earning his own bread and clothes, instead of squandering the hard earnings of his father. At the end of the first month, Gordon carried home his month's wages with much satisfaction.

"Henceforth I will never take any more money from you," he said to his father, "if God gives me health to earn an honest living."

Before long the elder Ronaldson fell ill of a serious and tedious disorder. Now, more than ever, did Gordon realize the importance of being able to earn a living, not

only for himself, but in order to care for his invalid father.

A beautiful trait now showed itself in Gordon. He spent nearly all of his evenings at home with his father, reading to him works of interest, and although not specially gifted in song, yet he would often sing the favorite songs of the old man. He seemed desirous of making amends for all his folly and of reciprocating a father's love, which he had amply received but had not duly appreciated.

One evening he entered his father's chamber with a basket of delicious fruit interspersed with choice flowers.

The father said, weeping, "Gordon, you are a great comfort to me."

"Well, father," replied the young man, "you and mother did your part by me when I needed your care and attention, and now I am only too glad that I can show a son's love to you. My great regret is that I did not show more of this love to my dear mother when she was yet with us. Although I always dearly loved her, yet I know I often annoyed her by my folly."

"Yes, Gordon, we are all apt to prize blessings most after we have been deprived of them."

"Then, too, father, I exceedingly regret my past record, for had I acted differently you would not to-day be the poor man you

are, nor would you have been compelled to labor in your latter days. I cannot tell you how sad it makes me when I see the home we once owned, occupied and owned by another, for I was one of your children who helped to bring about this unfortunate condition of affairs in life."

At this Gordon's father appeared greatly moved. An elder son, a thorn in the father's heart, had also caused the untimely death of his mother by his wretched life and sad death.

"Gordon," said father, "since you refer to the past, I will tell you that which you have never known. While you in a measure did do wrong, yet you have been a joy to me as compared to your brother Will, who is dead and gone, for he it was who robbed me of my home, and sent my wife, his own mother, with a broken heart to the grave. It is a page in his history that I have kept concealed from you."

"Oh, father, what was the trouble?"

"You were yet very young, when your brother involved me in troubles inconceivable. Although his mother early taught him that which was right, yet he trampled her teachings and piety under his feet. Time and again was I called upon to settle his unpaid bills, until at last my home became mortgaged. Of course, Gordon, you remember his death, but you never knew the

secret, nor did you know why it was your mother died at the same time. Your brother forged a check upon a wealthy merchant and with the money fled to another city. There, one night, occurred a terrible tragedy."

"Tragedy! Why, father, I am in the dark. To what do you refer?" asked Gordon, in an excited manner.

For the moment his father looked to the floor, and then raising his eyes said: "Late one evening an organ-grinder pulled his wagon up in front of a saloon in the city whither your brother had fled, and began to grind out 'Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.' The music floated up through an open window of the saloon. In that room sat several young men in the midst of cards, tobacco fumes, empty glasses and bottles. Your brother was there. As the music reached his ears he was stricken with remorse, for it was one of the hymns he used to sing at home when you children all gathered around the organ in the parlor on Sunday evenings. He arose to close the window that he might not hear the music, but as he touched the window the organ began to play, 'Where is my wandering boy tonight?' These words aroused him more than ever, for he realized he was not where he should be, and where his dear mother would least of all desire to find him. Half

drunk, and disgusted with his condition, he drew down the window, as if perchance he might shut out the sound of the music. Just then a messenger-boy entered the room with a telegram. 'It is for you,' remarked one of the men, and with that handed the telegram to your brother. Tearing it open he read, 'Come home at once, mother is dying.' He started to leave the room. 'Oh, come finish the game,' said one of the men; 'the cards are already dealt.' 'All I have against all I've lost,' he replied, and sat down. He lost all that he had left. Discovering that he had been cheated, angry words and a quarrel followed.

"Meanwhile the organ-grinder kept playing 'Where is my wandering boy?' Will was stabbed, and as he fell to the floor dying, he heard the last sound from the organ, 'Oh, where is my boy to-night?' At the same time in his own dear old home lay his broken-hearted mother upon her death-bed, wondering where her boy was, and hoping he might yet get home before her death. Turning to her daughters, she said, 'Please sing for me that hymn which Will used to sing with you when at home.' And they began 'Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.' Having finished the hymn, your mother, in a dying whisper said, 'Now sing Will's favorite piece,' and they softly sang 'Where is my wandering boy to-night?'

Alas, where was he? They little thought he was in a den of gamblers, a bar-room, lying on the floor, dying from a stab received amid revelry. As they closed the hymn with the words, 'Oh, where is my boy to-night?' your mother gasped her last breath with a faint exclamation, 'My boy! my boy!' and closed her eyes in death.

"With this sad story yet fresh in my mind," added Gordon's father, "I cannot but appreciate the more the honorable life you are now leading, and the great support you render me in my weakness. May you ever be kept as noble as you are now."

As the father thus brought to view some of the hidden pages of history, a history of blood and tears, of a broken heart, Gordon's eyes were fixed upon his father. For the moment his look was painful, while the father seemed greatly affected.

"Oh!" cried Gordon, as he threw his arms about his father's neck, with tears in his eyes, "how much you have been suffering all these years, and now for the first time I am learning of secret sorrows which you have never before made known to me."

"Gordon," said the father, "I never before told you this sad part of family history. For why should we darken the clear sky of the present with clouds of the past? However, I tell you all this now, in order that you may the better understand my feelings,

and my appreciation of the sweet consolations you now bring me in my old age.

"Perhaps I am partly to blame for the time you wasted prior to your entrance upon the practical duties of life, for I so dearly loved you that my leniency proved unwise. I should have rather advised you, and if necessary, urged you to leave off the ways of the world, and employ your time in a manner that would be helpful to you in after-life. But now that you have come back to the teachings of your dear mother, I feel you will never more depart from the same."

"Father, I have no blame to lay upon any one but myself for the wasted years. I was old enough to know what was right when I did wrong, and it would be unjust to lay any charges against you. For while mother was so very much concerned about my welfare, you yourself frequently and kindly called my attention to the young men who had made a shipwreck of life, and held them up before me as a beacon light, signaling danger to such as followed along in their paths."

"Well, I have tried, my boy."

"Father, it was evil associates that led me astray for a time."

"Yes, and could the secret of the downfall of many once precious lives be known, it might be traced back to this very cause."

Young men sometimes think their parents unkind and severe, when at the same time, as they grow older, they discover that it was for their own interests that they were guarded in youth, for one evil companion can soon lead an innocent one far away from the teachings of a good parent, and many are praying that their sons may be saved from evil associates.

After a pause, Gordon said, "Father, there is a young woman to whom I owe very much of what I am to-day. One who, like a sister, made me realize the folly of the life I was living, and also the influence I was having over others. This last worried me more than anything else. Since she spoke to me I have lived an entirely different life, and now I feel so firmly settled that I am sure you will never more have occasion to be disappointed over your son's doings, and your prayers in my behalf shall be answered so far as keeping from bad company is concerned."

"Gordon," said the father, as he looked seriously into the face of his son, "never forget that woman who has thus crossed your path. You are safer in the company of such young women than you are in the company of most men."

Sitting beside the arm-chair of his departed mother, Gordon for a few moments reflected on his present condition. In one

sense this was not a home. Looking about amid the cheerless surroundings, where was wanting the smile of a loving mother, he, like many others, was forced to ask, "What is home without a mother?" And yet, there was much around him to awaken past memories.

That vacant arm-chair he looked upon as almost sacred, for in it his mother had sat when he was a child and rocked him to sleep. As he looked through an open door, he saw a well-worn cradle. It stood there when his mother died, and had never been taken away. The knobs on the corners were highly polished by the mother's hand. The tops of the rockers were well worn by a mother's foot. These marks on the cradle were object-lessons to Gordon of a mother's affection for her child.

As he thought of her love, he happened to glance upon her picture that hung upon the wall. At once his eyes filled with tears, for it reminded him that she was dead. Ah, that he could only speak to her once more!

One is not apt to know how poor a son he was until he has children of his own. In the unreflective, half-conscious life of the child there is apt to arise a habit of accepting goodness and kindness as a matter of course, and sacrifices which cost much are rarely recognized as such until too late.

The weary days and sleepless nights spent for the child's sake seem to fit so exactly into the general course of affairs as to attract but little attention for the time being. But when once that parent, who so dearly loved and sacrificed, is taken away, then one is made to feel there is a great and painful void.

Still deeper, however, was that moment's grief to Gordon, when his eyes fell upon another portrait. It was a picture of one who had been very dear to him; who had played with him, eaten with him at the same table, slept with him in the same bed. It was the picture of his brother. This portrait had once been to him a pleasure, but now all the former associations of endearment were broken.

Rising, he walked up to the picture and turned its face to the wall.

"Why are you doing that, Gordon?"

"Because of what you have told me this evening. I could not but be indignant as I looked at mother's face, and just opposite hers see the face of one who took her away from us."

The only comment the old man made to this reply was a deep sigh, while Gordon himself sat with his eyes fixed upon the family clock in the corner of the room, with its top reaching up almost to the ceiling. It had stood there for many long years, and

the same old pendulum kept swinging to and fro, as if never weary in well-doing.

Just then the clock began striking, and to Gordon's surprise it struck twelve. Bidding his father good-night, he retired and slept, dreaming of

"Home, home! Sweet, sweet home."

IN THE MOUNTAINS

CHAPTER II.

IN a few years more Gordon had so prospered that he found himself enabled to add greatly to his father's happiness. The one great aim of his life seemed to be his father's comfort and enjoyment. He had learned that it is, after all, more blessed to give than to receive, and that in adding to the happiness of another, he was adding to his own enjoyment.

Seeing his father was growing more and more feeble, Gordon decided to take him away for a few weeks. One evening he entered his father's room with a smile, and said, "I have been quite successful during the past few years, and have arranged to take you to the mountains for a month or two. We will start to-morrow."

"Gordon, this is a very great surprise. It is most gratifying to hear from your own lips of your success. Though I have heard others speak of it, yet I feared the report was perhaps exaggerated. But it is so kind of you to be constantly remembering me and heaping upon me so many favors."

"Father, I could not possibly forget you."

"No, Gordon, I don't believe you could, for your nature would not permit you to be indifferent, like many children, who anxiously await the day when they need have no more concern about an infirm parent. When our strength gives way and we are no longer a help to our children, we parents are often only a source of worry, and some are made to feel that they are only in the way. But, Gordon, when a son like yourself comes to his parent and brings his hard earnings, then one should thank God for being the father of such a child."

"What I do for you is but that which is due you and which I most cheerfully and lovingly render."

"I believe, Gordon, that you show me kindness, not so much from a sense of duty, as of love."

"Why should I not? Children who, like myself, have had faithful parents, can never fully repay them for what they have received. The least we can do is to show by such small tokens as these our love toward our parents."

"But, Gordon, not all children do that."

"And yet, father, all should do so; for surely, whatever their parents' deserts may appear to be, they ought in every case to have good treatment from their offspring, in spite of all."

"It would seem so, Gordon."

"Yes, father, however, there are no doubt times when children must suffer for the sins of their parents."

At these last words, Gordon's father appeared greatly moved. Presently he said—

"It may not seem just the right thing to speak unkindly of a departed parent, nor do I wish so to do, and yet, now that you have expressed yourself along a certain line, I will say that I appreciate the force of your remarks; for my own father and mother were both careless toward their children. They allowed us to have our own way and were often too indifferent to the influence they might exert over us. Mother went one way, and father another, while we were left to look out for ourselves the best way we could."

After a short pause, Mr. Ronaldson added:

"There is a common, but a most grievous mistake made by many a man after his marriage."

"What is that, father?"

"The mistake of not making a companion of his wife. Whenever the husband wishes to attend some place of amusement, he should take his wife with him. The children, too, should be made companions to the parents. A child does not learn much that is good on the street, especially when playing there late at night, as we children were

allowed to do. It took years of struggle before certain evil impressions were wholly eradicated from my mind. Unfortunately for your brother Will, he was born before I succeeded in freeing myself from the effects of such an early training, and no doubt he inherited, both from his father and his grandparents, much of that which led to his ruin. Happily for you, Gordon, I became a better man and father before your birth."

Gordon listened to this statement from the lips of his father with a great deal of interest, then, after a few moments of silence, he quietly arose, and going to where his brother's portrait hung, he turned the face again from the wall, and looking upon it with deep feeling, he said—

"Father, although brother Will did wrong, and for a time I did not wish to see even his face upon the wall, yet now I perceive that I have in a measure condemned him wrongly, for perhaps, if I had been born at the same time, I might have been another Will. I could never before quite understand the sad end of brother's life. It did not seem natural to me that, with such a good father and mother, there should be such a child. Now the explanation is clear. It is the visiting of the 'iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.'"

"And still, Gordon, it seems hard that a

grandchild should have to suffer for the sins of his grandparents."

"From one point of view you are correct, father, but there is another way of looking at this matter."

"How is that?"

"It is the fact that while 'iniquities of parents are visited upon their children unto the third and fourth generation, mercies are shown unto thousands' of such as are good and true. Many a child to-day, who has wicked parents, is good and pure, because it had good grandparents. Hence, the rule works both ways, and is in favor of such as do good. For while 'iniquities' are visited unto but the third and fourth generation, mercies are shown unto thousands."

"It seems to be the old story of 'Sowing and Reaping.'"

"Yes, father, we are all reaping as others have sown, and are laying foundations for others to build upon; and it is largely because of the good foundation, as laid by you and mother, that I am to-night what I am. True, for a time, I stepped from it, but by the goodness of a woman my feet have been placed back upon that foundation which was laid by you and mother when I was but a child."

The next day found Gordon and his father in the mountains stopping at one of the best summer hotels. Scarcely had they arrived, when Gordon spied the woman who had made a man of him. She happened to be summering at the same hotel. Since the time when Janet last saw Gordon, he had greatly changed. He felt now that he could approach her and meet her more upon a level, so far as character was concerned.

After having seen to his father's comfort, Gordon awaited his opportunity of speaking to Janet. She was reading when Gordon met her on the piazza with the words, "Good evening, Janet."

She raised her eyes from the book she was reading. "Why, Gordon," she said, "I am so glad to see you! You have changed somewhat in appearance, but if you will allow me to say so, I must confess that I see an improvement."

"Thank you. No doubt you thought there was room for such improvement when you last saw me, and I am glad to know that you are pleased."

"Yes, Gordon, you said you would some day surprise me, and while I am not surprised, yet I am most delighted, for it is only what I expected."

"You are inclined to be complimentary," said Gordon, smilingly.

"No; only a matter of fact. I never flat-

ter. But I am always ready to see the good in others, and am willing to acknowledge such traits of character."

"It certainly is very good of you to look for virtues, for I know I have my faults."

"At one time, possibly, you thought I was searching only for motes, but it was intended rather to bring forth the hidden beauty."

"I have since learned the full meaning and blessing of our former conversation."

"But tell me, Gordon, what have you been doing with yourself?"

"Partly what you told me to do. And I am glad for this chance of expressing to you my gratitude for your influence."

"I'm so glad to know my influence has been for the better. A young woman never wants to know that she has wronged another by her influence. She may for the time think little of such injury, but in after years her conscience condemns her, and she is made miserable."

"Janet, you need never have such regrets with regard to me. And it was fortunate that I changed my life when I did, for scarcely had I accepted a position and begun to work, when my father fell ill."

"Oh, I'm so sorry to hear of such an unfortunate beginning; but I hope your father's sickness was nothing serious."

"No; not necessarily serious, and yet tedious."

"That made it important, therefore, for you to come to the front and assist him, and I'm sure, Gordon, you were then not wanting," said Janet, in a manner that assured Gordon of her confidence in him.

"I have tried to do the best I could."

"Your father, I suppose, is still living?"

"Yes; but an invalid. And thinking it might do him good, as well as add to his pleasure, I have brought him with me."

"How noble in you, Gordon! I knew you had a good heart, and only lacked a friend to tell you your faults. Now I am more than ever convinced that I was not wrong in my judgment of you, for your love for your invalid father tells of a true heart."

"I am glad to know you think so."

"I do, Gordon; many children have kind words and deeds for parents only after they have passed away. Many a mother has sacrificed her life's best days and nights, denying herself pleasures and comforts for the sake of her child, only to be forgotten in after-years by the very one for whom she did so much. Unkind words, frowns and indifference are often received by the mother, when smiles, loving tokens and courtesies should be given instead. A kiss of affection and an occasional expression of love and endearment would cheer her far

more than all the kisses and flowers, lavished upon her at death. Unhappily, we do not think of those things until it is too late. Many an aged father or mother would be glad to be remembered a little more in life and less in death."

"That is a fact only too true in the experience of many," said Gordon.

"Yes, Gordon,

"We plant sweet flowers above the spot
Where rest our unforgotten dead,
And while the roses bud and bloom
We beautify their lonely bed.
We rear the snowy marble shaft,
That every passer-by may learn
How sacred memory keeps her trust
In votive gift and storied urn.

"But, oh! the hearts that ache and break
Through all the long, bright summer days,
For some sweet word of tenderness,
Some generous and outspoken praise;
And, oh! the bitter tears that fall
O'er life's mistake and cruel fate,
That all things which the heart most craves
Of love and glory, come too late.

"It were better by far to—

"Take the rose that blooms to-day
And lay it in some loving hand,
And wait not till the ears grow dull
To tell the sweet thoughts that you planned.
One kiss on warm and loving lips
Is worth a thousand funeral flowers,
And one glad day of tender love
Outweighs an age of mourning hours."

Gordon had been in the mountains but a very short time when through the kindness of Janet he made many acquaintances. She was so purely unselfish that she seemed to take great pleasure in introducing him to her many girl acquaintances. He was very genial in society, and soon the hotel was brighter for his presence.

Gordon was a skilled musician, and many courted him for his musical ability. There were also several ladies at the hotel who were gifted in both vocal and instrumental music, and together they filled with delight the souls of many who sat by and listened.

"Music," said Gordon one morning after a private musicale, "oh, the power of music! I believe every soul is attuned to music. It is divine; it is immortal. Praying and singing should go together."

"Why so?" asked one of the company.

"Because praying is taking, while singing is giving."

"Yes," chimed in another, "singing is thankfulness in full bloom. It is a creature of heaven itself, which rises higher and higher until its wings brush the very gates of heaven."

"God himself must be a lover of songs," said one of the ladies, "how else can we account for the sweet singing of the birds in the forest where perhaps not one in a thousand is heard? Why has God created them

for songs? It would seem that God would have the world full of joy. I believe God would have us rejoice more and weep less. He does not desire tears, but would that our joy be full."

"Since you are all so enthusiastic over music," chimed in a sweet-voiced lady, "I wish to remind you of the power of music. Many a discouraged soul has been so utterly cast down that all hope appeared gone. Music has time and again revived and animated and restored such a life. The soldier in battle has often been ready to give up in despair, when the strains of music sweeping across the battlefield have inspired him to renewed effort. Through it he has often rallied and carried the day."

"Ah, yes," said Gordon, "songs are also balm for bleeding hearts, and often music or a sweet song has banished grief. Songs may bring tears, but will be followed by rejoicing."

"Will song ever cease?" asked one of the ladies.

"No," replied another. "Old Mortality may carve his name on tombstones, or write it on the pages of history. But when once the chisel of Old Mortality shall have been laid aside, when the pen shall be rusty and forgotten, song will still live, for up in heaven they 'sing a new song.'"

"That will make heaven an attractive place," said Gordon.

"It will," answered one of the ladies. "Some sing few songs here. Trouble has made them hang their harp upon the willows. They sit down and weep by the rivers of Babylon. Their eyes are blinded with tears and they see not the notes. Their ears are filled with sorrow and they hear not the music. But in heaven there will be neither tears to blind the eyes, nor sorrow to deafen the ear, but all will sing."

"That idea is comforting," said Gordon, "to such of us as are not specially gifted in singing. I often envy those who can sing sweetly, and I have frequently thought that if I could sing well I would never refuse when asked, for it seems to me that such as are thus gifted should be willing to use the talent."

"Why not sing, even though you are not specially gifted?" asked one of the company, "for," she continued, "I have never heard that the birds in the feathered kingdom jeer at the twitterings of the sparrow, even after listening to the nightingale, and are we not better than the sparrows?"

The hour had now come for dinner, and having previously planned for a row upon the lake in the afternoon, they all retired from the music room, and prepared for the dining room.

Gordon tried to be as unselfish as Janet, but somehow or other he found himself comparing Janet with the rest of the ladies whom he had met, and her company was always preferable to him. One lady who had shown him many courtesies he soon learned to dislike because of her manner. She was rather handsome, but her beauty made her vain, and often she would sit at evenings in the parlor seemingly deep in a book, when in reaily she would be posing. The guests all soon learned to know her weakness, and it was not long before her friends were few. "I have learned to dislike that woman," said Gordon one evening to Janet, as he entered the parlor and saw the lady thus seated in the centre of the many guests, apparently unconscious to all that was going on, yet all the time wondering how others regarded her. After a few more days the lady vanished from the hotel, and no one knew whither she had gone. A few days later her name appeared among those who were stopping at a prominent hotel at the seashore.

Summer acquaintanceships develop usually very rapidly, and that of Janet and Gordon, strengthened by the events of former days, was no exception. Soon it became whispered around that they were engaged—such rumors are readily created at such places.

One evening as Janet and Gordon were returning from a walk, several ladies and gentlemen were sitting on the veranda at the hotel, when one of the ladies said, "Oh, have you heard the latest?"

"No; what is that?" asked one of the gentlemen.

"The reported engagement of Miss Morton and Mr. Ronaldson."

"Well, I have suspected it for some time," said a third party.

"I don't think much of his taste," said one of the ladies in a manner that told of a little jealousy.

"Oh," said one of the gentlemen, "I think Miss Morton a perfect lady, besides, she is very handsome."

"I can't see what the young men see to admire so much in Miss Morton," said another lady.

"No," chimed in still another, "I never did care much for her."

"Well, well," said one of the young men, laughingly, "it is certainly amusing to hear you girls criticise one of your own friends. Yesterday we were all together and had such a delightful time, and now you all seem to dislike Miss Morton."

"I don't dislike her," said one of the ladies, as a blush painted itself upon her cheek, "only I think Mr. Ronaldson might have done better."

"The trouble with some of you ladies," said another gentleman, "is that you are often the best of friends until one of your gentleman friends shows attention to another lady, and then you dislike that lady because she has your friend."

"It is really a fact," said one of the sweet-natured girls in the company, "that the best of friends thus often become enemies. And how foolish it is. Why, if a gentleman friend of mine saw more in another lady than he did in me, I would not show my weakness by letting him know that I for one moment cared."

"Yes, but you would never afterward like the lady who accepted your friend's attentions," said one of the ladies in a rather positive manner.

"If I were to act ugly to her I should only show my own ugly disposition," answered the lady.

"After all," said one of the gentlemen, "may it not be only a false rumor of their engagement? You know people are so ready to circulate reports. A young gentleman dare not be seen with a young lady more than two or three times, before some one whispers 'They are engaged,' and in a very short time it is upon the lips of a multitude."

"Such reports do wrong to the individuals," said another of the young men, "for

it is often very embarrassing to the young lady to have such reports circulated."

"Oh, some of them like it," said one of the gentlemen, with a twinkle of the eye, to a gentleman sitting just next to him.

"And others do not," responded the sweet-natured girl. "There are few women," she continued, "who cannot get some sort of a husband, and when a woman does not marry it is generally because she will not—not because she cannot. Frequently such have some high ideal, which they are unwilling to sacrifice, or perhaps some life-long service for others which they will not forego."

"The trouble with some young men," said another lady, "is that they mistake a lady's actions. Because she may happen to smile pleasantly upon an acquaintance, he thinks the lady is in love with him. It is a great mistake for any one to think that a lady schemes for the capture of a man. A lady must be sought and won; she doesn't offer herself."

Just then Janet and Gordon came upon the veranda. They had scarcely appeared, before one of the ladies said:

"Oh, come join us and tell us of your walk."

"Yes," said another, "we shall be delighted to have you among us."

The gentlemen looked at each other in a little surprised way, while the sweet-

natured young lady had great difficulty in suppressing a smile, for the present greeting appeared so different from the conversation which had taken place a few moments before.

Janet and Gordon found seats, and the conversation was of a very general character. Soon after the company broke up, and all prepared for one of the pleasant places of a good hotel—the dining room.

As the summer advanced Janet and Gordon still lingered in the mountains, and many were the happy walks they enjoyed. Once it was to Grand View, once to Inspiration Rock. Now to Kaaterskill Falls, then to Sunset Rock, and also to Artist's Corner. Standing upon the summit of a lofty peak, there was revealed one of the grandest pictures of nature that mortal eye could witness. In such a panoramic view of autumnal glories in the mountains, one beholds the gold of the tall, graceful poplars, the crimson tints of the maple, the scarlet of the swaying gum, the cherry, with its leaves red-tipped, the mighty russet oak, all contrasting beautifully with the tall green pines. Added to all this, the eye beholds in the very lap of the mountains a beautiful lake, whose placid surface is dotted with boats. Far off in the distance lies the "Rhine of America," Then, too—

"There was the dream-land of later days,
Where Rip Van Winkle slept in peace,
Wrapped up in deep poetic haze;
A twenty years of sweet release.

"Of forest trail and lake and stream,
Rich poems bound in green and gold,
Whose leaves reflect the Autumn gleam
Ere Summer months are growing old."

It was one afternoon, during a walk over this dream-land, that Gordon said, "Janet, isn't it perfectly lovely here in the mountains, away for a season from the rush and bustle of city life?"

"It is certainly a delightful change," replied Janet, "and when one thinks of the grandeur of the scenery, it seems a pity that so few comparatively are permitted to enjoy this heavenly atmosphere."

"Yes, it is very different from the air we breathe in the city, which is first heated by the brick walls and stone pavements."

"Isn't it strange, Gordon, that so many people go abroad who have not seen their own country? I am sure the eye could not well look upon finer views than some we have here in the mountains."

"I have often thought the same, and have been provoked at such persons returning home from abroad. They describe in glowing colors what they saw, when perhaps if they had taken the trouble to visit first their own country, they would not be so ready to

condemn to obscurity our own in their ecstasy over others."

"But, you know, Gordon, it is the fashion of the day to go abroad, and then return with the foreign accent."

"Titles somehow also prove a great attraction," said Gordon, with a smile which at once told the meaning of his words.

"Speaking of 'titles,' Gordon, many persons are mistaken, for while many of our beautiful women marry such men, nevertheless, it is often not so much the fault of the daughter as of the parent. Some parents seem to lose sight of the real worth of their daughter when they look at a man who has royal blood. In their fondness for the one they overlook the other, who is of far more importance—their daughter. While a young woman may love a titled man, yet it is often a forced love, and many, I fear, marry the title rather than the man himself."

"Referring to marriages, Janet, I am not surprised at the unhappiness of many people. Some marriages are almost as absurd as would be the union of the month of May with December. There is no doubt that some lovers are blind and fail to 'see the pretty follies they commit.'"

"Yes, Gordon. Many are indeed blind."

"In business matters precaution is taken in the selection of a partner; but much more

care and consideration is required in the selection of a partner for life. A beautiful face or fine clothes may appeal to the eye, but unless a man or woman possesses more than these, marriage will prove a poor business."

"The trouble with many of our young people is, they are unduly carried away upon first impressions."

"Yes, Janet. And such impressions frequently prove but phantoms, and the victims receive a mere shadow for what they had hoped was a substance."

"The first inquiry, Gordon, should be concerning the character of the man or woman. Then, starting with a good foundation, there is something on which to build an affection. No matter what may be the other qualifications, character should be the first to be considered. And character means more than being 'good' in the sense of not being 'bad.'"

"A man of character, as you have well said, Janet, is one who is good, not only in what he is, but in what he has done. Some of the worst shipwrecks of life might be prevented were the young more careful of their associates."

"It is for that very reason, Gordon, that young people should be very careful to select noble associates. No matter how good may have been the home training, 'evil

communications corrupt good manners.' To walk in the mud is to have some of that mud cling to you."

"Yes, and the bad results of evil associations are forcibly illustrated by the fact that we are judged by the company we keep."

"And, generally speaking," interjected Gordon, "such conclusions are about correct."

"A man's company usually tells what the man is. One can make no greater mistake than to mingle with persons of doubtful character. Character is the richest jewel a man or woman can have, and it does not pay to sell it for 'a mess of pottage,' or a momentary gratification of worldly pleasure."

"Janet, since I have known you, I prize more than ever before that which is so frequently overlooked, but which you hold up so prominently, namely, 'Character.' As a gift of God, character is wholly spotless, pure and white as the snow; an emblem indeed of the throne on high, where at last all that have been true and good shall reign."

"Yes, character will be the passport."

"But, Janet, I sometimes wonder why it is that many seem to prize so little this richest of all gifts?"

"They are thoughtless," replied Janet,

"and hence careless in the things that go to make it."

"I may have been thoughtless in many things, and I have been indifferent to matters of importance. I have often been unwise in the squandering of both time and money, but, I am glad to say, I have always cherished and held most sacred what you would call my character."

"I'm glad you can say so, Gordon, for when once a man loses his character, then his best friend is gone, and his evil influence unmeasured, even when the last atom of matter shall have wandered back to that chaos from whence it came forth. Man may try to call back an evil word or deed, but as well try to call back the scent that is gone forth from a flower, or the light of the sun after it has gone down."

"We are apt to forget, however," said Gordon, "how much unseen resistance-power is employed in order to make character."

Gordon had realized from his own experience how that men are tempted to go the wrong way by physical, mental, and moral inducements, and that those temptations must be resisted, otherwise we lose all that is worthy in our natures.

Just as soon as man ceases to resist, character is shattered into fragments. Unfortunately for many, they do not possess

enough of the moral power of resistance, and, in our condemnation of them, we do not know of the powers that were at work to overthrow integrity, otherwise we should often judge one another's errors with more patient charity.

But as Janet thought for a moment upon Gordon's plea for man, she replied:

"That is just what makes the man, and is the reason we admire all the more such as are ever alert to resist evil forces."

"The best time for beginning such resistance is in very early life, for if young men lack the proper early training which it was the duty of their parents to give them, then we can only reasonably expect weakness on their part in later years."

"While yet children, therefore, there is need of watchfulness on the part of the parents," added Janet, "for playmates often become husbands and wives. Hence, there is great need of precaution in the selection of associates for children."

"Yes; when the very young are allowed to form ties of love, the parents discover later on the difficulty of severing those seemingly pliable ties."

"That is very true, Gordon. We see it here in the mountains. Friendships are here created between children that will be very difficult to sever in after years."

"Speaking of the mountains, Janet, I

notice also another very great power in the formation of character besides associates."

"And what is that?"

"Books," replied Gordon. "For books and papers are but another manner of quietly conversing with men and women. What one reads has even a greater power for the moulding of character than the personal contact with the author of that which is being read."

"Yes, for in reading we allow the other person to do all the talking."

Janet's words were but the expression of many others, for when one enters a library he is but standing in the presence of many men and women whose works lie before him. In that company are to be found many of the most estimable characters, to sit at whose feet and listen to whom is well worth man's while. They speak to him words of wisdom and power, and give him good understanding. There is need of thus conversing with these men and women, for at best man knows very little, and is, therefore, wisely enjoined "not to lean upon his own understanding."

"I have often thought," said Janet, "that in view of the impressions formed, and the lasting impressions made from the reading of a book, there is not only need that authors should be careful in what they write, so as to make their readers better,

but readers should be very careful in their selection of books, to read the very best."

"Yes, Janet, but unhappily so many readers relish that which is not best for them."

"But there is this to be said in favor of such as do enjoy the fine play or elevating book," said Janet, "it bespeaks a purer and nobler ideal of life within themselves."

It was while they were thus conversing that Janet suddenly stepped back with such a fright that she almost fell to the ground. Gordon was walking along a few steps before her, for they were now climbing a steep, narrow pass. The earth was soft and the steps of another made no sound. A ledge of rock, hung with leafy vines, jutted out into the path. From behind this a rough specimen of humanity suddenly emerged. Gordon thought he heard a deep sigh, and looking behind him he saw Janet pale as death.

"What is wrong?" asked Gordon excitedly.

Just then his eyes fell upon the strange-looking man whom Janet had seen. Gordon stepped back a little to let him pass by, while at the same time Janet clung to Gordon's arm. Neither one spoke, but both Janet and Gordon felt that there was yet something behind all this, for the look on the man's face told of a wicked heart. They

both stood bewildered, stunned, both by the event itself and its suddenness.

"What do you wish?" asked Gordon after a moment of such anxious suspense.

"What do I want? I want to die," answered the man in a tone that told of some hidden mystery.

Janet and Gordon each looked at the other in deep wonder and surprise. They would gladly have passed on, but owing to the narrowness of the way, they could not do so without coming in very close contact with the man, which they at the time were unwilling to do. The man saw their fright, and looking them in the face said, "You need have no fear of my doing you any harm, although my appearance may frighten you."

"What is wrong with you?" asked Gordon.

"Remorse," answered the man with a look upon his face that seemed to tell of hidden agonies.

"What has caused that remorse?" asked Gordon with a little more courage, and less fear.

"That hand," said the man, as he raised up his right arm. "In it I held a dagger, and with that dagger I took the life of a bright young man."

At this the man shook his head and

looked down to the ground at his feet as if looking at the person he had slain.

Gordon appeared greatly affected at this strange revelation, for he recalled the tragic death of his brother Will, which his father had recounted to him only a short time before.

Janet saw something was wrong, but seemed afraid to speak. The man himself noticed the strange look of Gordon, and with a stare said to Gordon, "Why are you so affected by that which I have said?"

Now for the first time the man seemed to have gotten a good look at Gordon. Throwing his hands up wildly he staggered back, exclaiming: "Great God! Is this the dead come back to life? Tell me, are you Will Ronaldson?"

Gordon was now more startled than ever, while Janet stood trembling, not knowing what would be next.

"My name is Gordon Ronaldson," answered Gordon with a look of surprise.

"Are you not the man, that one night in a distant city in company with a number of young men, was seated in a room over a saloon, and do you remember the man who, pulling up his hand-organ below the window, played that night, 'Where is my wandering boy,' and also, 'Nearer, my God, to Thee?'"

Gordon turned deadly pale, and Janet

trembling asked, "Gordon, what in the world is wrong?"

"Pardon me, lady," said the man, "but he recalls an awful tragedy. I was there that night, and in a fit of drunken stupor I dealt a blow which I thought had caused death, and for it I was imprisoned for many years. Having served my sentence, I was released, but I have never since been myself. I have been wandering about here in the mountains, living more like a wild man than a once civilized being."

Gordon stood speechless, and looked pitifully into the face of Janet as if for sympathy. But Janet knew not what to say, for all was mystery to her. Gordon had by this time discovered that the man mistook him for his brother, whom he thought in some way had returned to life.

"Tell me, Mr. Ronaldson," said the man, "did you have a brother?"

"I did," answered Gordon with a deep sigh, at the same time trying to suppress the tears that were stealing down his cheeks.

"Is he dead?"

"Yes."

"And how did he die?"

"He was killed one night in a row."

"Then, sir, I am his murderer, and I thank God that I have thus met you, for since that night the agonies of conscience

and remorse for the deed have worried me day and night. At the time I was not accountable for what I did, and I have since then been most wretched. Mr. Ronaldson, won't you, for God's sake, forgive me, and henceforth let me go in peace?"

Gordon looked at Janet and then at the man in bewilderment.

Although the man had served his sentence in prison, and had since then been in abject wretchedness, being thus more than punished for his crime, yet, it was hard for Gordon to forgive. But as he beheld the look of agony upon the man's face, and saw therein the deep plea for mercy, his heart was touched, and he was moved to pity.

"It is hard to forgive such an act," answered Gordon, "but believing that you have been amply repaid for what you did, I will forgive."

"And forget?" asked the man quickly as if wishing to have all wiped from memory.

"No, I cannot forget; at least not for a time; perhaps some day I may be able to forget."

"Until that time I shall not be satisfied," replied the man. "However, I am thankful for the expression of forgiveness," he added.

At this they parted. While a burden had been laid upon the heart of Gordon at this strange meeting, yet, from the soul of the man a great burden had been rolled

away. Confession of his crime had given him partial relief.

Janet and Gordon soon tried to forget all about what had happened, for it was one of those unpleasant episodes in life of which the least said, the better it is for the parties concerned.

It was during some of the more serious remarks of Gordon that Janet said:

"Gordon, I have been thinking a great deal this afternoon of the marked change in your conversation from what it was when I first met you. It is now a conversation unto edification, and one that could be well imitated by more of our young men in society; for indeed so much of the talk of the present day is anything but interesting and by no means edifying. True, there is a happy medium between eternal preaching and constant frivolity, and yet many come short of that happy medium. One needs only to listen to any ordinary conversation that is carried on between young people to be convinced of the hollowness of much that is said."

Janet might well appreciate the change, for it is indeed astonishing to know how many there are who seem to relish that kind of talk which is most unwholesome and injurious in its tendency. Not content with the mere manufacturing of idle gossip, as conceived by an idle brain and a wicked

heart, they eagerly seek customers for their wares, and are ready to stop persons on the street corners to deal out their stock of evil gossip. The tongue, although a very small member, has a wonderful influence over the whole body. An unoffending tongue is ordinarily a good test of a perfect character, for such persons learn first of all to control themselves properly before attempting to offer their services in the control of others. With a very small helm a ship at sea is turned about, even against the resistance of fierce winds; but the tongue frequently becomes unruly, and since its natural tendency is toward evil, unless it be checked, it will do incalculable mischief. The great mischief often done by a single spark but faintly describes the havoc done by an evil tongue, especially when "it is set on fire of hell" as frequently it is.

"Many friends are thereby made enemies," added Janet, "and often when all seems peace and harmony in home circles, church or society, some one casts in the firebrand of evil gossip and destroys all the bright plans and expectations."

"How true, Janet, for I have often seen it turn out so. At the very time when all was bright, then it seemed the evil one would send some one with 'words of fire' which soon kindled a great flame. I have often wondered what could be the cause for

such conduct, for surely no one can find any pleasure in the kind of conversation that does harm to others. There surely must be a cause, therefore, for such actions."

"There is a cause, Gordon; words are only the fruits of a fertile soil, which is the heart. Pure thoughts as they arise from a pure heart, will develop into pure words, pure deeds, and a pure character. Unfortunately for many, they are careless in regard to their thoughts. One man goes into the forest, and from the timber he gathers there he builds only an uncivilized abode, while another man goes into the same forest and from similar material he erects a beautiful edifice. So it is with many people in the gathering of material for conversation. Some elevate thereby the morals of their own and others' lives, some only cause mischief."

"It depends largely upon the intent of the person who thus gathers the material."

"Yes, if he start out with the determination of doing good, he will most likely accomplish that which he undertakes, but if he is bent upon mischief-making, the devil will give him all the material he needs. The block of granite may be used either as a stepping-stone or stumbling-block. So with much of what is said concerning others."

This is true in every-day life, for the very same words may be made to do them good

or harm, according to the manner in which they are said.

Take, as an example, nature herself. The icicle is but the result of one drop of water frozen upon another, and whether or not the icicle thus formed is clear and sparkling depends upon the condition of the water that formed the icicle. So our very thoughts form the material from which is made up our conversation, and if those thoughts be pure and clean, our words will be of a like nature; but if they be foul, then will the words and character of the person most likely correspond to the nature of the wicked thoughts.

"Janet, do you think many persons would be willing to have their thoughts printed in a daily paper?" asked Gordon with a smile.

"No; but if people were more careful in the selection of food upon which they feed their thoughts, then would their words and actions contain far less of that which is demoralizing and harmful. The trouble with many is that they are eager to gather the very kind of material that is calculated to please idle gossipers, and as a result much of the conversation is along that very line of speaking evil of others.

"It would seem, therefore, Gordon, that there are two classes of persons who are to blame for much of the wasteful and harmful conversation; the one class consists of those

who manufacture the gossip, and the other class those who distribute the same."

"Yes, some people seem to find great delight in telling just such things as might tend to cause trouble. Instead of going about as peacemakers, they purposely misunderstand, misconstrue and misrepresent the truth. If more of the conversation were bent along lines for the betterment of society and the general welfare of mankind, then would there be far more happy men and women and far fewer wounded hearts bleeding because of pointed arrows of gossip hurled at them. Nor, indeed, would there be so many remorse-stricken ones at death exclaiming, 'If only my evil influence could be gathered up and buried with me! If only I had my life to live over again, how differently would I act toward others!'"

Janet and Gordon had grown weary of climbing over the rocks and had, during their latter conversation, been seated upon a large boulder, unconscious of any other persons in the mountains. They were still deep in their subject, when a dozen or more young ladies and gentlemen suddenly appeared on the scene and as with one accord, cried out, "Oh, here are Miss Morton and Mr. Ronaldson!"

They looked up, Janet saying at the same

time, "Come and be seated, for this rock is large and strong enough for all."

"Yes," replied Gordon, "we've been enjoying this lovely view; for never in all my life have I seen its equal."

"No; and especially not," said one of the gentlemen, "when in company with one who can give additional inspiration by her presence, for what would Eden have been to Adam without Eve?"

"Oh, we just had a grand time this afternoon," said one of the young ladies. "We were all down at the lake and had a lovely row."

"You forgot to tell about the large fish we caught," quickly added one of the gentlemen. "We caught one large trout, and, in all, quite a little string of fish."

"But you had better put emphasis on the word 'little,'" said one of the younger girls, jestingly.

"We always make allowance in fish stories," said Gordon, with a smile, "and especially when caught from lakes in the mountains."

"Who did the rowing?" asked Janet.

"We, of course," answered one of the girls, "for the men were all afraid."

"We did the fishing, however," chimed in another of the men. "But you were so glad when we came ashore that you thanked your stars you were once more on land."

"To tell the truth," he said, "I feel perfectly safe in the hands of the ladies, except when in a row-boat, for you can never tell when they will throw you overboard."

"That would be an easy way of getting rid of some men," said one of the ladies.

"Not if they could swim," quickly answered another.

"Oh, here come those miserable boys," said Miss Cathcart, one of the older ladies in the company, as several of the boys from the hotel came whistling along the road.

"Well, they are everywhere," said another, in a manner that told of her dislike for them.

"They are a perfect nuisance," remarked one of the gentlemen, as he looked up from a book that he had just opened, and was about to begin to read. "I am never able," he continued, "to read for five minutes in peace without being annoyed by them."

"I don't see why people bring them to such places as this, where they are a source of annoyance to every one about them," chimed in still another of the ladies.

"Well, you know we must be pestered wherever we go," added one of the gentlemen, "so we might just as well make the best of it."

"You must all have very bad brothers," said Miss Rae, one of the better-natured of the ladies.

"Why so?" asked one of the gentlemen.

"Because you all so dislike those boys. You must remember they are only boys, and will not be men before they are at least twenty-one. I indeed often feel sorry for the boys, for they are seemingly not wanted anywhere. They are not wanted at the summer hotels, nor at boarding houses, nor anywhere scarcely. In fact, the boy often hardly knows where to go."

"Oh, well, they are so fearfully mischievous. That is why people dislike them as a rule," said one of the ladies.

"You surely would not expect them to sit down and act like old men," answered Miss Rae, by way of a gentle rebuke. "I believe," she continued, "in boys knowing their place, and yet we must be sure to give them a place. Most people are with boys as they are with mosquitoes; they want to get rid of them as soon as possible."

"I am glad to hear you defend the boys," said Gordon, as he looked the young lady in the face. "Boys are not given enough encouragement," continued Gordon. "They are scolded too much. People are often prejudiced against them and see in them only faults. What the boys need from us all is our prayers, our sympathy, our help. They also need our kind words. The world is after them. Satan is after them. Ill-treat them, and they will soon be most cordially

received and welcomed by the world. Evil associates will court them, and at about the time when we look to them for an influence for good, and themselves a blessing to the age in which they live, then we will receive instead only a harvest of disappointments in their lives of vice and crime."

"But, Mr. Ronaldson," said Miss Cathcart, "in your defense of the boy, you must not be too free in your praise of him, for you know this is an age when boys are so different from what they formerly were."

"In what way?" asked Gordon.

"Most of them are so very irreverent, and disrespectful. Many of them seem to show little or no attention to their parents."

"Why blame all for a few?" asked Gordon.

"I was just thinking," said Miss Rae, "that some of you are too severe in your judgment upon the boys, as a class. So far as irreverence is concerned, it is often not so much the fault of the boy as it is of the parent. For it is the duty of the parent to instill reverence into the boy by setting a good example."

"Nor do I believe that boys are naturally irreverent," added Gordon.

"The greatest fault I have to find with boys," said still another of the ladies, "is they are so utterly selfish, and look out only for themselves."

"Indeed they are," chimed in Miss Cathcart. "They occupy the best seats at the hotel; they rudely force themselves in the presence of others without so much as an apology, and if they happen to have any good thing, they would never once think of sharing it with others."

"I'm afraid you do not rightly understand them," said Miss Rae, who seemed to be the only lady in the number who was ready to defend the boys. "They are always very polite to me," she continued, "and I believe as a rule they are to every one who treats them kindly. I have always learned that the best way to get along with boys is to treat them kindly, for while you can persuade them, you cannot well drive them."

By this time the boys who had occasioned this interchange of opinions, came up to the young ladies and gentlemen. They had gathered some delicious berries, and in a most courteous manner, one of the number, who had evidently been appointed to present them, stepped forward and said, "Excuse us, ladies, but we boys have gathered some berries for you, intending to give them to you at the hotel, but seeing you here, we thought you might enjoy them more now than later."

At first no one seemed willing to accept the favor. Then Edwin Carl, the smallest of the boys, stepped up and said, "Oh, you

must take them. They are for you. I crawled far in among the briers to get those large ones, and we want you all to eat of them. We knew you ladies would not want to go in among the briers, and although we got some thorns in our fingers, yet it is a great pleasure to us to give them."

"Oh, I don't want their berries," said Miss Cathcart in a low whisper to the lady next to her.

"Why I thought you were so fond of them," answered the lady in the same low tone of voice.

"So I am, but I do not want them from those boys."

"Boys, you had better keep them," said one of the gentlemen, who had overheard Miss Cathcart's remarks, thinking thereby to please her, and at the same time get rid of the boys.

"Oh, no," said Edwin Carl, "that would destroy all our pleasure. We did not get them for ourselves. We wanted to surprise the ladies, for we knew they are so fond of them."

Miss Rae then arose and took the large paper containing the sweet berries and said: "Boys, you have been very thoughtful and kind, and let me assure you that we appreciate your kindness very much." "Yes," added Gordon, "we are grateful for them."

"You are very welcome," said Edwin,

"and if at any other time you want any more, let us boys know, and we will only be too glad to gather them."

"Oh, yes," added all the boys, "it is only fun for us."

At this the boys smiled, and bowing, they quietly withdrew and resumed their journey back to the hotel, happy at having been able to show a kindness to others.

The berries were eaten, after which they all chatted for a few moments and then the ladies and gentlemen took a walk round about the lake, while Janet and Gordon, on their way back to the hotel, resumed their conversation, which for the time had been abruptly discontinued.

"Janet," said Gordon, "speaking of conversation, I should like very much to hear your opinion on that subject in general. In other words, what would you suggest as adding to pleasing conversation?"

"I would begin by saying with Pope:

> "Be silent always, when you doubt your sense,
> And speak, tho' sure, with seeming diffidence."

"If we analyze pleasing conversation," she continued, "we find that the human voice is among the prominent elements. Spontaneously we yield to the charm of a sweet voice; it is the ornament which nature lends to goodly speech. It is, therefore, essential that we cultivate gentleness,

refinement and sweetness of voice if we would win others, even against their will. Many golden opportunities for delightful intercourse with a kindred spirit are lost, because we have not the courage to express freely our convictions of the hour."

"Perhaps the cause of that is, Janet, that we are afraid of giving utterance to our thoughts to-day, for fear of contradicting ourselves to-morrow."

"It is wisest not to dive into the depths of memory for what one said yesterday, for, Gordon, we cannot always be held responsible for thoughts independently and truthfully expressed. If one has anything to say, say it.

> "If, in talking from morning till night,
> A sign of our wisdom there be,
> The swallows are wiser by night,
> For they prattle much faster than we."

"We must disabuse our minds of the thought that it is necessary to say something all the time, 'silence is often golden,' therefore equivalent to eloquence.

"It was said of Macaulay that 'he had occasional flashes of silence' which made his conversation perfectly delightful. We have such a vast field of rich and varied subjects to give inspiration for brilliant and cheerful conversation that it is all the more humiliating to listen to the tattle and bab-

blings at an average social gathering, small talk in abundance, plenty of gossip made to order to suit the facetious as well as the most fastidious.

"There are always some that strike one as the very personification of mental stagnation; they respect no moral code, and by their insinuating allusions think of getting into the good graces of those that lend only too willing an ear to their idle, empty chatter."

"Yes, Janet, and you will find plenty such mischief brewers in all polite society."

"It is such that make conversation of the day demoralizing," said she, "we do not sufficiently value good conversation; we should strive for the sweet sensation which true and noble sentiments awaken, not that we ought in all our conversation to aim for the ideal, and lift our thoughts above the natural and human affairs of life. But any movement towards the elevation of the tone of our present system in conversation would be eminently desirable, as it would broaden our views and give our faculties free play."

"It is a pity, Janet, there is so little sincerity in conversation of the day."

"The world is grown so full of dissimulation and compliments that in most of the circles of society words are barely an expressive signification of the thoughts uttered. The great misfortune of our social

life lies in so-called intellectual jealousy. Good, bright thoughts are often strangled for fear of calling forth the brilliant flashes of other minds.

"It is hardly necessary to say that we should be natural and truthful. If our words are far above our real nature, then the most profitable thing is to develop our nature up to the standard of our words.

"Could we agree to bring our portion of good will or good humor among the friends we meet, it would be an easy task for hosts to assist in influencing their guests to express their thoughts freely, and so make conversation general, and with a little tact, an evening thus spent would indeed be a 'feast of reason and a flow of wit.' Most persons love best to converse with those who are cheerful and hopeful. Frowns and sulkiness find no abiding place with 'sunshiny' natures.

"Nor should we obtrude our distresses upon our friends, but rather cultivate the art of being a sympathetic listener.

"An easy manner, combined with good judgment, is another desirable quality. It is through communion of thought that we gain a liberal education, thereby strengthening our minds and developing our character.

"Then we can truly sing with the poet:

"My mind to me a kingdom is,
Such present joys therein I find
That it excels all other bliss."

"Janet, I have been most delighted with your views on conversation, and am sorry you haven't even more to say, for it is very pleasant to be a silent listener to one like yourself.

"In music, one recognizes the value of rests, and in speech that same element is often most forcible. Silence, ah, yes, even temporary silence, would frequently avert disputes. One can therefore appreciate the words of Carlyle, 'Beware of speaking; speech is human, silence is divine.' Pythagoras gave a good rule when he said, 'Be silent, or say something better than silence.'

"Accordingly, Janet, I try as much as possible—

"In the hush of the Valley of Silence
To dream all the songs that I sing;
That the music which down the dim valley,
May each find a word for a wing,
That to hearts, like the dove of the Deluge,
A message of peace they may bring."

"Gordon, I wish more persons thought like yourself upon this matter of conversation, for if much of the talk were put down upon paper and read, it would not be worth the paper on which it is printed, and beside, no one would want to father the writing before them. It is like wine to a weary

body to talk with one like yourself, Gordon, who has the proper conception of life, and the good fortune of expressing that conception. The conversation of such but naturally appeals to one, and when they have gone from us we feel better for the meeting."

As Gordon listened to these words, a smile stole across his face, for, like as the explorer when suddenly discovering a bright sign of his successful efforts, cries out in joyful triumph, Eureka! "I've found it!" Gordon had discovered the channel to the sacred chamber of Janet's affection.

By this time they had come to the end of their delightful walk, and were once more back again at the hotel.

At the hotel was a small child that attracted much attention. She was not only beautiful but most affectionate, and became the pet of all who knew her. It was Janet's sister Rose. That afternoon as her father left the hotel to attend to some business in the city, she came running with her golden hair in ringlets clustered around her shoulders, and entwining her arms around his neck, she most affectionately embraced him as he tenderly pressed her to his bosom, saying, "Good-bye, Rose. Be a good girl till papa sees you again, and don't get lost." With that the father stepped into the

coach and was carried down to the depot to meet the train.

That same afternoon a servant took a few children out for a walk, among whom was the little girl Rose. Rose was an only sister of Janet, and the two were most devoted to each other, even though Rose was a mere babe. In some mysterious manner the servant lost sight of Rose on her way back to the hotel that afternoon, and when she looked for her, she discovered that the child was lost. She searched and called, but all in vain. Bringing back the rest of the children she reported the news at the hotel. In a moment the whole hotel was a scene of confusion, while the mother in great grief wrung her hands in agony, crying, "O, God, bring back my child! My child, my child, oh, help hunt for her!" In a moment more and almost every guest was in search of the lost. They followed every path, looked into every thicket, called, but all in vain. Night came on but no Rose. It grew dark and men went out with lanterns, and some kept up the search all through the night. The next day the lake was drained, but neither alive nor dead could the child anywhere be found. Janet for the sake of her mother suppressed her grief, but was bleeding at heart for her sister.

The father came on from the city, and thowing his arms about the neck of Janet

there was a most touching scene. Nature could not be suppressed, and as if struck by a death-blow, he almost sunk down to the floor. Others could hear his convulsive sobs, and in the intervals, the touching exclamation, wrung by overwhelming agony from his bosom, "O, Rose! my Rose!"

Just then the mother appeared and the scene was most pathetic. The three fell in each other's embrace, and for a few moments not a single word was uttered, only burning tears and heart-rending sobs. Almost every eye of those who witnessed the scene was filled with tears, and the silence was painful. Then they retired to their room, and every one felt the awful gloom that had settled down upon that family. Every effort was made for the recovery of the child, whether dead or alive, but no traces whatever could anywhere be found.

The next evening, as Janet and Gordon were seated upon the piazza at the hotel, they saw coming up the path the man whom they had so strangely met several days before at the narrow pass in the mountains. It was dusk, but his appearance at once startled them. As he came near the hotel, they saw he was carrying something in his arms. Others at the hotel seemed startled at the appearance of the man. Presently he stepped upon the piazza and sunk down in a chair. He seemed to be exhausted.

The guests exchanged glances as they watched the man.

"Who can it be?" asked a lady seated near Janet.

Janet knew, but said nothing.

Presently the man spied Janet and Gordon, and at once came toward them.

Janet whispered to Gordon, "I do believe he's coming to us."

By this time the man stood beside Janet, and looking her strangely in the face, said, "Pardon me, but have you a small sister?"

Meantime he held in his arms, carefully covered up, the bundle which occasioned curiosity on the part of all.

"I have," answered Janet, "but she was lost here in the mountains two days ago, and we have not been able to find any trace of her."

Janet's little sister was almost the exact image of herself, and to have seen and known Janet, would be to recognize the child.

At this the man drew aside a light veil from his bundle, and placed in the arms of Janet that which he had seemingly so carefully guarded. Janet looking down at the heavy burden in her arms, saw there the face of her own dear sister Rose. Just then the eyes of the little one that had been asleep, opened, and seeing herself in the arms of her sister, the little child clasped

its arms about the neck of Janet and wept for joy. In an instant every one knew that the lost child had been found, and like bees around the fragrant flower, so all seemed attracted to the little child, Rose.

In a moment more, and Janet's parents were upon the scene.

The mother with outstretched arms, and the tears streaming from her eyes, ran to Rose, and taking her up in her arms, kissed her, mingling tears of endearment with every caress,

Then came the father, and as he caught his child's look fixed upon him in absorbing tenderness, the event swept over him with such overpowering force, that he longed for a place where he might go and weep alone for joy.

Just then the stranger stepped forward and said, "We can never tell when we need a friend."

"No, that is very true," replied Gordon, "and I did not think you would be able so soon to be a friend to me, for in finding this child, you have been a friend to us all."

"Won't you tell us," asked Janet, "how you came in possession of this child?"

"Do you see that wound," said the man, pointing to a deep gash in his forehead.

"How came you to get that?" asked Gordon.

"Well," answered the man, "as I was

wandering about the mountains this afternoon, I heard a child crying. I listened, and then running through the thickets in the direction of the sound, I finally saw a little child lying at the foot of a ledge of rocks. In trying to get to her in my haste, I fell, and for a time I lay senseless by the side of the weeping one. Recovering from the faint, I picked her up and at once recognized her as the sister of this lady.

"The child seemed weak and almost dead from hunger, but I had with me some little food in the shape of crackers, which I gave her and she at once rallied. Then I went about in search of its sister. Not knowing at what hotel she was stopping, I carried the child with me to another hotel, but there I soon discovered that no child had been lost.

"I at once started for this hotel, and I had scarcely been seated when I saw that I had come to the right place."

Then turning to Gordon the man asked, "Mr. Ronaldson, will you now forget?"

"Yes," replied Gordon, "everything."

Mr. Morton remembered the stranger very handsomely, so that from that time forward, he was no longer seen in the mountains, but started life over again. He had been forgiven, and with the help received from Janet's father, the stranger was enabled to start with renewed hope.

The summer season at the hotel was gradually passing by when one evening after a walk, during which Janet and Gordon had talked over some important matters, they returned to the hotel, where they were most affectionately greeted by little Rose.

It was nearing sunset, and unwilling to break off the conversation by going at once to their respective rooms, they looked about for a place upon the veranda where they might be alone. With the very large number of guests driven there from the cities by the great heat, and sitting out of doors in order that they might drink in the health-giving tonic of the mountain air, Janet and Gordon found no little difficulty in securing a place where they might be alone without interruption. Presently they found a delightful corner where they could sit and converse at ease. Soon they became oblivious to all others about them, for they were gazing upon an enchanted region. Upon the windswept heights far above the heat and worry of the busy city life, the setting sun, a great ball of fire, slowly sank in the west until it gently kissed the topmost peak of the mountain, while its golden rays fell down across the rugged cliffs like the tapestry of heaven. At last it was hidden out of sight by the high, rocky hills. A few clouds as a background furnished a bold relief for the gold

lining about them. Delicate hues and tints seemed chasing the spectral messengers to the shores of heaven's brightest sunset. The floating clouds seemed to tell of the deep breathing of the mountain as it was about to go to sleep for the night. All the powers of heaven were apparently vying with each other to add to the sublimity of the scene. Nature betrayed her innermost soul of poetic beauty, while wings, tassels, plumes, lances and spears of light were all covered with the fleecy drapery of the sky, across which a network of heaven's choicest handiwork was spread, in a deep radiance of rose and gold.

"—— Lo! The Catskills print the distant sky,
And o'er their airy tops the faint clouds driven,
So softly blending that the cheated eye
Forgets, or which is earth, or which is heaven."

In that enchanted region thoughts are inspired which cause one to exclaim in the words of a sacred writer of old—

"Oh, that my words were written,
That they were printed in a book,
That they were engraven with an iron pen,
In the rock forever."

One can well appreciate why the great leader Moses was called up into a mountain to receive from the mouth of God the Divine Law, or why the Great Teacher Him-

self, at "seeing the multitude, went up into a mount" to teach them. Truly, that soul must be asleep which would not be inspired at beholding the beauties that loom up before the eye in such a place.

When Mendelssohn, hearing an old man play upon an organ, asked to be allowed the privilege of touching the key-board, he was refused at first, until at last, his persistent request was granted. Scarcely had he touched the keys, when the old man looked up into the face of the skilled player and in amazement asked, "Who are you?"

"I am Mendelssohn."

"To think," replied the old man, "that I at first refused to grant you the privilege of touching the organ!"

What that music was to the ear are the mountains to the eye, and it is only when one steps aside from active service and quietly sitting by, feasts upon grandeur, that the soul awakes to joy and gladness, and one realizes he is nearer God than ever before as he beholds that of which it may be truly said:

"The heavens declare His glory, and the firmament showeth His handiwork."

After having revelled in such a glorious sight, Janet and Gordon awoke, and realized that they had like one of old, been, for a time, unconscious of self. They had been, not in "Dream Land," but—like the Apos-

tle—"caught up into a third heaven," and seen things "unspeakable," for who can tell either in song, word, or upon canvas, the feelings occasioned by such ecstatic surroundings!

No wonder Gordon almost forgot what Janet had been speaking about just prior to their return to the piazza. But memory is very kind at times, and especially in the remembrance of those things which most please us.

"Janet, said Gordon, "I have longed to discover what would constitute a passport to friendship in your estimation, and I am happy to know that you base that condition upon what a man really is in himself, rather than upon what he possesses externally. Indeed, your own speech at times leads me into a region of thought where the very joy-bells ring out sweetly, and where my soul breathes an atmosphere that is stimulating. From the very first time that I met you I have respected you greatly, and although nothing more was needed to add to your attractiveness, yet time has presented some of those attractions in a new aspect. Your loveliness has been to me, not the sudden bursting forth of a beautiful flower from the bud, nor the quick flash of the sunbeam through a cloud, but the gradual unfolding of a life of beauty. As fame opens the gates of her temple to but a chosen few,

so God has given to some women special gifts. Like as the meridian sun shines by its own light, and to endeavor to brighten or adorn it were wasteful and ridiculous excess, so it were folly for one to endeavor to adorn those whom God Himself has so richly adorned by His own touch and finish."

"I fear, Gordon, you are overestimating what to you appears an ideal life," said Janet, "for I perceive that you would give me a graceful compliment in return for what I have said."

"Janet, to prove the sincerity of my words, I will now say to you that which I have long wished to tell you; and that is, I love you. I know you are an heiress, and I am not a man of great means at present, and I also have the care of my beloved father, whom I am resolved faithfully to care for as long as he lives. But the future is bright, for I have the confidence of the firm with whom I am engaged. Some day I hope to be very comfortably fixed in business. For a few years it may mean a sacrifice on your part, but in the end you will have the pleasure of knowing you helped to lighten the burden of hardships and discouragements that are bound to come before success. In other words, Janet, will you marry me? I do not wish you to give me an answer at once, but as I am going to leave here in the morning, I hope you may yet to-night quietly

and calmly meditate upon what I have said and decide whether or not you would be willing to cast your lot with mine 'for better, for worse.' I have carefully considered that which is required of a husband to make life what it should be, and I am ready to perform that part to the best of my ability should you decide to accept my offer."

Janet knew well that Gordon loved her, yet a blush came to her cheek at his words. Those words inspired fresh love in her own heart, for out of heaven, earth or the Bible, there is nothing so pure as that love which is truly willing to live for another's happiness, to the forgetfulness of selfish interests. Eve is said to have plucked many flowers in her wanderings through the Garden of Eden, which she wove about her neck and twined into a wreath about her head. There was one, however, a love-blossom, that she pressed close to her heart. The angels, looking on with sweet approval, smiled at this act of Eve, which at once quickened the fainting leaves of the flower into life, and the love-blossom took deep root in the heart of the wearer. Since then there have been many daughters of Eve to wander through floral bowers and similar places of romance where the love-blossom has been gently pressed to the breast until at last it took deep root in the heart. Thus it was with Janet. Gradually Gordon had been twin-

ing flowers of "forget-me-nots" about Janet's life until now at last the love-blossom was handed her. As the blush gradually passed from her cheek, the roots of the love-blossom seemed to be spreading.

"Gordon," said she, "there was a time when I should have answered your question very differently. Then, I saw but the 'rough ashlar' of your life. Now, your true self has been revealed to me, and I have learned to look upon you very favorably. However, you have asked much. It means a great deal for a woman to say 'yes' to such a question. I have always felt that when once the time came in my life for such a decision, I would not act hastily, but rather as you suggest, decide calmly when alone; for when I once say 'yes,' I shall ever be true to my promises, and endeavor to be a faithful wife."

"I fear there are very many ladies who give their consent in marriage without first considering what is required in that answer."

"Yes, Gordon, and to me it is a most serious question, so that before giving an affirmative, I want to ask myself whether or not I could take the part of a true wife, if when my husband came home worried over his business, and perhaps annoyed and angry as he entered the house, could I always kindly greet him with a smile and a

few kind words;—for a man, I should think, would but naturally look for such a welcome from his wife as he enters his home. Then, too, I should want to be able to prepare, or at least have prepared, some little tempting dishes for the table, and to ever keep myself so attractive, that I would be my husband's own ideal of a woman. I believe, in that manner, generally speaking, a woman can keep her husband warmly attached to his own home."

"I should think a man would then be so well satisfied with his own home that he would want to spend as much time there as possible."

"I should also want to be able and willing to add to his happiness whenever opportunity afforded, and avoid all that might tend to incense him, or cause him to think less of me."

"A wife's courtesies and little deeds of kindness will accomplish much toward sealing a husband's affections for life."

"Yes, Gordon, and a good wife has often been the very ballast of the husband to keep him anchored down to that which is honest and of good report. Many a wife has thus been to her husband the 'tugboat' that has gone before, towing him out of channels in which he would otherwise have sunk and been washed ashore.

"Napoleon himself lost his best friend

when he separated from Josephine, for from that moment on, his career changed and only failure and disappointment stared him in the face. We are not surprised, therefore, to hear him when he was nearing his sad end, speak the name 'Josephine.'"

"If more women thought as you do, Janet, then there would be more heaven-made marriages. You have well said that a woman has power in the home for happiness, for she has that innate gift which, if properly developed and used, is just what man needs to meet and overcome many of the emergencies of life. She it is, who often gives the best counsel, and if she rules with love, she can take a city, to say nothing of a man's heart."

"Woman can do much toward making home comfortable and harmonious."

"While man is true and conscientious in the discharge of his own domestic duties, his wife should show that true inner spirit of love and sympathy which form an anchor for all happiness. Many doubtless do the best they can, yet amid family cares, it is sometimes almost impossible for a wife to be to her husband what she really might wish to be. But it is a mistake to take from the husband that which a wife owes him—her love and sympathy. Without this, all else would fail.

"Man may not be submissive either to force or even to compulsion, but a woman skilled in love and sympathy, can ordinarily bring humbly and submissively to her feet the most obdurate of men."

"That is all very true, Gordon," said Janet, "but you must not forget that woman has something to expect as well as man. Too many men like to receive attention without reciprocating the same. There are many men who forget that they owe something to the home. It is not enough for the husband to eat his meals and sleep there; unless he has a higher conception of an earthly Eden, he can never expect it to be the 'sweet, sweet home.' He must bring into it his true affection, and help his wife in her efforts to brighten married life. It is all folly for men to expect women alone to make of the home what it really should be. If more of the time spent at clubs were spent in trying to make others happy at home, there would be fewer unhappy wives and children. If a man comes sulking into the house, he will find both children and wife shrinking from him, for while 'echoes bound to a joyful sound, they shrink from voicing care.' The sulking man is not a favorite at the club, and he cannot expect to be greatly admired in the family circle."

"No, a man would surely not want such actions from his wife."

"There are some men," said Janet, "who impress one as being cold and unaffectionate in their manner to their wives. They appear entirely insensible to all the charms of female beauty, as well as incapable of feeling the emotion of love."

"It is the way of some men," replied Gordon.

"No doubt it is, Gordon, but it is not conducive to a wife's happiness. As a man loves an affectionate greeting from his wife, even so the wife has a right to expect the same from her husband. The man who approaches his wife with the same distance and reserve with which he would approach any young lady who may happen to be a visitor in the home, will soon cause his wife to think she is his wife but in name. The husband should not be insensible to the charms of his wife, nor should he remain cold, distant and reserved. Otherwise he will make miserable his wife, as well as himself."

"I see," said Gordon, "that you look at marriage somewhat from a business standpoint, rather than from mere fancy and empty sentiment."

"Why should I not?" she replied, "surely business principles are required to properly manage a home."

"You believe, therefore, in having an un-

derstanding before entering into an estate for better or for worse."

"I certainly do, for before marriage many are very agreeable and willing to make all manner of concessions, but after marriage these sweet promises are broken. Besides, Gordon, while men like nice tempting dishes and a wife neatly attired, many sometimes forget to provide the necessary requisites."

"I am surprised to hear you speak as you do of those important matters," said Gordon, "I must confess I have never thought much of these things, but now that you refer to them, I acknowledge that you are correct in a large measure. We men frequently expect a little too much, and perhaps your plain statement of facts may cause me to view some things in a different light from what I might otherwise have done."

"I am glad you agree with me," said Janet.

"One to be honest must agree with facts."

"So you admit that what I have said are facts?"

"Janet, while men no doubt naturally love to see their wives attractively dressed and love also a good table, yet, as you say, they have no right to expect these things unless they provide the necessary means for the purchase of such delights. And when they fail to make such provisions, then

they have no right to make unkind comparisons with those who are thus provided for."

"I do not like to say it, Gordon, but do you know some men impress me as if they married only for the winter; while still others marry apparently with the expectation of having their wives take care of them, instead of faithfully doing a husband's part."

"Such men are not moved by a wife's love."

"No, Gordon, for they are almost as cold and heartless as a marble shaft in a cemetery."

"But you do not regard all men as such?"

"No, for I know well that there are men who live solely for the happiness of their wives, and are willing to make all manner of sacrifices to add to their enjoyment. The wives of such men should be proud of their husbands, and do all in their power to reciprocate such devotion. At the same time I know that many wives are forgetful of such things as go toward the making up of one that 'looketh well to the ways of her own household.'"

"Janet, there is one thing that I have often noticed in life which to me is a great mistake, and yet, one very common."

"And what is that?" asked Janet in seeming surprise.

"It is the lack of appreciation on the part

of some men as to what it costs a wife to make the meal-time what it should be. There are very few things to my mind which can take the place of the happy gathering about the family board. But when a man comes home an hour after meal-time, and begins to scold and blame his wife for what is his own fault, he can only reasonably expect her disappointment in his lack of appreciation of her best efforts. Love will gladden any heart, and if more men 'thought on these things,' they could add much to the happiness of home life. It would seem better that the paths of some had never crossed; still the unhappy crossing of some paths does not fix the rule. All along life's journey there are homes to testify to the many who are happy and are better for the crossing of paths."

"Gordon, as you suggest, I will withhold my answer until to-morrow morning and will see you before you leave for home. *Auf wiedersehen*," and she smilingly bowed to Gordon, and withdrew.

That evening Janet did not come down into the parlor after supper, but remained in her room. Although she was often very settled in her manner and conversation, yet, when in company with others, she was very free and easy. Every one at the hotel was in love with her. She was purely un-

selfish, of great vivacity, full of sunshine. Her disposition was frank, cordial and affectionate. Her generous, confiding spirit, won the love and hearts of all. She was therefore missed that evening, and at once several ladies went to her room, fearing she was ill.

There was a gentle knock at the door, and a sweet voice from within answered, "Come in."

"We thought you were sick," said one of the ladies as they entered the room.

"No, indeed," smiled Janet, "I never get sick, especially not here in the mountains."

"We have too good a time here for illness," said one of the girls laughing.

"Won't you be seated?" said Janet. "I haven't chairs enough for you all, but you can sit on the bed."

"Oh, come, girls," said one of the jolly number, "let's tell each other's fortune."

"That's just lovely," said another, "for I want to get away from those two gentlemen who came to the hotel last evening."

"Aren't they horrible?" said another in great emphasis.

"Yes, they act as if every lady at the hotel were smitten with them. All they know is to talk about themselves and their money, and I get tired listening to them."

"And they are so proud," said one, "that they scarcely know how to walk. I like to

see a gentleman in good clothes, but I tell you, girls, clothes don't make the man, even though they may make him good-looking. True, a man's character may often be known by his apparel, and though certainly different stations not only allow, but even demand different and more elegant modes of dress, yet a foppish attention to it, in every sphere of life, is a mark of imbecility of understanding and effeminacy of mind."

"But come, girls, now for the fortune."

"Who will be the fortune-teller?" asked one of the ladies rather anxiously.

"Oh, that will be easy," answered the lady who first proposed the idea. "Just wait and I will ring up the bell-boy."

"What in the world do you want with him?" asked one in astonishment.

In a few moments the boy knocked at the door and was ordered to bring up some corn-meal.

"Oh, it's to be corn-meal and names," said one as if she had discovered some great secret.

In a few moments more, and all were seated around a small table with little balls of corn-meal in which were names written on small bits of paper.

"Here are three for you," said one to Janet. Janet carefully let the balls fall into a glass of water, and every eye was fastened upon them as they began to open.

Presently up shot a small piece of paper from one of the dissolved balls, and Janet took hold of it, saying, "Quick, let me see who it is!"

As she read a smile crept over her face which was at the same time brightened by a modest blush.

"Who is it?" asked one.

"Ha, ha," answered another, "it is Mr. Ronaldson."

Little was thought of it by the rest of the ladies, but to Janet, it was rather a strange coincidence. They kept up the amusement for some time, when the ladies retired to their rooms, leaving Janet to herself.

Seated by the open window and looking out upon the mountains brightened by the light of the moon, Janet pondered over what had happened and over what she and Gordon had talked about that evening before supper. The more she thought over the matter, the more inclined she was toward a favorable answer to Gordon's question. She tried to persuade herself that perhaps it was but a momentary impression, but such effort appeared all in vain. She could not find in her heart to say "no" to him, and yet, it all depended on whether her parents would consent to the marriage.

She did not sleep much that night; her mind was too full of thoughts. Janet had a mother who loved her dearly, but not

wisely. Her father had his mind fixed upon a young man of great riches for his daughter, and her mother was even more determined than he that Janet should marry a man with a fortune.

Janet arose earlier than usual next morning. Her parents, who occupied the room adjoining hers, were awakened by her moving about, and they also arose. When prepared for breakfast, they entered Janet's room with loving words of morning greeting, but Janet, remembering the duty she had to perform, was just a little reserved, and in spite of all efforts, the tears rose to her eyes. This was noticed by her mother, who asked: "Why, Janet, what is wrong?"

Janet threw her arms around her mother's neck and weeping, told her of Gordon's love for her and how she had learned to love him in return.

She was not mistaken in expecting her parents' disapproval of her marrying Gordon, for scarcely had she made her confession than they began an unkind denunciation of him.

"What," said the mother, "our only daughter, and she to marry a poor clerk in a bank? No! I will never give my consent." The father added to the fire so quickly kindled by the wrath of the mother, and continued vehemently, "No, Janet, you shall

not marry Gordon Ronaldson. Not if I have to sell all my property and go abroad and settle down in a strange country, where he will not be able to see you, or even to find any trace of you."

Janet was silent. As the dove gently presses down its wing over the arrow that is preying upon its vitals, covering it up from all view, so Janet, after the sword had entered her own heart, said nothing, but covered up the wound and hid it from them and the world.

As her parents went to breakfast, Janet watched her opportunity, and seeing Gordon alone at one end of the piazza, she went to him and told him her sad story.

"Gordon," said she, "last night I sat alone in my room, carefully considering what was required of a wife, and I had made up my mind that I would try to meet these requirements, and would share your joys as well as your sorrows. But I could not decide without first consulting my parents. They object, and tell me I must not marry a man who has not a fortune. But, Gordon, I wish to say this to you; you have above all other men the warmest place in my heart."

"Alas, Janet, I am bitterly disappointed," exclaimed Gordon. "I know that I am a man of humble means, but may not such a man with honesty of purpose and character

have a brighter future than the man of wealth without a definite purpose of life? There may yet come a day when your parents will think differently."

"You speak of the disappointment, Gordon, remember you are not alone in feeling that; I pray God's blessing upon you, and that the Angel of His presence may ever keep you in the right path."

"You need have no fear of my future, Janet, for if God gives me health, I will some day prove myself worthy of that which I am now denied. Our paths may yet cross again. My father and I leave this morning, but before bidding you farewell, I wish, even amid my sorrow, to express once more my gratitude to you for what you have done for me."

"Good-bye," said Janet, and hastening away she joined her parents at the breakfast table.

After sipping a cup of coffee, she left abruptly and retired to her room, where she indulged in thoughts of Gordon.

THE SEPARATION

CHAPTER III.

"Alone, alone, all alone,
Alone, on the wide, wide sea."

SO it seemed to Gordon, as he returned home from the mountains with the refusal of Janet fresh in his mind. At first he could not appreciate the words of Tennyson, when he wrote,

"'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all."

And yet he felt glad he had met her, for she had been much to him, and he felt himself a better man in every way for the acquaintance, even though he had lost her.

On his return to business, his close application to work and the faithful discharge of his duties gained him promotion, and an increase of salary. Life opened up before him with greater encouragements than ever before, and he resolved to carry out, as far as it lay in his power, the request of Janet when she bade him farewell. He was succeeding, and he would retain his honor, no matter what else happened.

It was not long after that he crossed the path of one whom he had first seen at a religious meeting, Helen Russel.

She was so faithful at all the services and seemingly so sincere in her worship, that Gordon discovered the hidden jewel in her life, which might become one of God's gems. Knowing of the dark page in her life's history, he was loath to speak to her. But time proved to him that she had sincerely repented of her sins and that she was deserving of the recognition of those whose aim in life is to "seek and save." And yet, for fear of being misunderstood, he, like all others, passed her by unnoticed.

One day, as Gordon was returning home from the bank, he saw Helen with a large basket of provisions enter the house of a poor family he himself had oft helped. He afterward learned that she had thus frequently gone into that home, helping thus to care for the needy from her hard earnings, for at the time she was employed upon a very small salary. This touched the heart of Gordon, and the next time he saw her at church he spoke to her and tried to make her feel welcome and at home. As time passed on they became better acquainted, and Gordon showed her kindness and praised her for her interest in the poor.

One morning, after a most spiritual service at Church, Gordon and a Miss Pierce

passed down the aisle among the last to leave for home. To their surprise, upon lifting up their eyes as they were about to leave the church, they saw Helen Russel seated in the last pew. She had been greatly moved by the sermon, and, like Jacob of old, was unwilling to leave until she had received an additional blessing.

Gordon spoke politely to her, at the same time extending to her his hand, but Miss Pierce quickly looked another way with a twitch of her head.

"Ah," said Helen, "you scorn me, forgetting that I am still a woman, whatever I may have done. You should remember that a woman, even in degradation, holds something sacred; something undefiled, some pledge and keepsake of her higher nature."

"Helen," said Miss Pierce, "I once loved you as a sister, but now I prefer not to know you."

"But surely I need some hand stretched forth to lift up my soul?"

"You are not deserving of help," she replied.

To the eye of Miss Pierce there appeared for Helen no room for repentance, even though she sought it bitterly with tears.

"And yet," answered Helen, "are we not told of the love of God to even the chief of sinners; how then is it that I am to be rejected by you?"

"What a woman most despises in her sex is that which robs her of true womanhood. For this reason I refuse to recognize those like yourself."

"That is just what I have said, for while much is spoken and written in behalf of the unfortunate, yet when it comes to the real practical application of the truths preached and spoken, then there is much that is wanting. Where is that real warmth of greeting that would cause one to think that they were welcome among Christian women? It is all very pleasant to theorize, but theory will not save either the fallen or starving. It is very easy to say that all sin shall be wiped out of existence and that sinners shall be driven into the streets, but how are they to reform? Who will give them a home or even shelter from the fiery darts of the world?"

"Do such expect the Church to give them homes?" asked Miss Pierce rather indignantly.

"When Christian men and women hedge up the way of sinners, they should first open up before them a better way, into which, having entered, they may be able to feed and clothe the body honorably, otherwise all theory is useless. The soul is often reached and saved for future glory by first caring for the bodily needs of evil-doers. The mere fact of saying, 'be ye warmed or be ye fed,'

will neither clothe the body nor satisfy the hungry, so that the first requisite for evil-doers is to open up before them a way that will lead to a higher life."

"Come," said Gordon, "let us be seated here, for it is yet early, and we may possibly be benefited for our having met."

When they were all seated, Helen, turning to Miss Pierce, said, "There was a day when we were fast friends, and often did you kindly take me out driving after my business hours in your father's employment. Those were happy days for me, and I have often thought of your kindness to me. But now you seem not to know Helen Russel. Why is it?"

"You know very well."

"Yes, I do know," said Helen, with a significant nod of her head. "But I will not annoy or embarrass you with the past," she added, "only it does seem that you owe me a little more than scorn and hatred. But when a woman has done wrong, her worst foe is her own sex. I am inclined to believe that if the order in the scripture to 'cast the first stone' was obeyed, it must have been a woman who hurled it, and no doubt she selected one of the largest stones she could conveniently lay her hand upon."

"In that you are wrong," said Miss Pierce; "you try to shift the blame and now

find fault with those who will not take you up in their arms as a bosom companion."

"Oh, no; I do not ask to be made a bosom companion, but I do ask for mercy and a kind word of recognition, for, to say the least, I have a right to claim these, and especially from you."

"Helen, you have nothing to claim of me."

"It is indeed strange," Helen went on, "that you, a worker in the Church, the daughter of one of the leading representatives in Church circles, should have so little regard for one who at one time both you and your father regarded so highly. But it is the oft-repeated story of the world—you are the daughter of a rich merchant, your father, a prominent man in both Church and society, and I, a poor sinner, am nothing. But alas! God knows how I became a sinner."

"And you know, too," replied Miss Pierce, in words as unsympathetic and cold as a block of ice. "I am sorry," she continued, "that I ever knew you, and my father feels ashamed that people should know you were ever in his employ."

"And I feel ashamed myself," said Helen. "A thousand times have I regretted ever having served him. The girl who has a good home and kind parents, may well thank God every day of her life for them. Don't envy the girl who, whether from choice or

necessity, forsakes her home and goes out into the vast, unknown world alone. If such a one keeps out of the clutches of sin, there is no crown bright enough for her hereafter.

"If only women had a little more sympathy and pity for the poor unfortunate Magdalenes, and would give them a kind word and sisterly counsel, then there would be more Marys and fewer Magdalenes. But if they are utterly scorned, what hope is there for them? What means of rescue? What deliverance? Oh, for more 'Sisters of Charity!'"

Helen very vividly recalled the poem, "The Heart that Dares not Sing" as illustrating how that not only does the world itself forsake the poor unfortunate, but even the Church too, often abandons such, refusing even "The Helping Hand."

"From the butterfly's wing you've brushed the gold.
Do you wonder it flaunts no more
In the happy sunshine, but, pale and cold,
It lies at your feet on the floor?

"You've stolen the perfume from the flower.
Do you wonder it hangs its head
And 'neath kiss of sun or caress of shower,
Stands drooping as if 'twere dead?

"You've silenced the song in the birdling's heart.
Do you wonder, with folded wing,
It broods all day? Why even a bird
With a saddened heart cannot sing.

"And how can you say, with a careless smile,
That it is but a little thing
To steal the perfume, or silence the song,
Or to tarnish the butterfly's wing?

"Why, that golden-dusted butterfly's wing,
That lies there, tattered and cold,
Was a woman's radiant innocence,
Worth more than the finest of gold,

"And a woman's life was that perfumed flower.
No sunlight can ever illume,
Nor kiss revive the pale, withered leaves
Of a life that has lost its perfume.

"And a woman's heart was that singing bird,
That broods with folded wing.
Ah! the saddest thing in this dreary earth
Is the heart that cannot sing."

This kind of reasoning on the part of Helen seemed to impress Miss Pierce, and her manner appeared less cold and unsympathetic, while her words told that she felt somewhat condemned.

"I feel sorry for you after all," she said, "for, Helen, I admit I have been rather unkind and unfeeling to one who has been unfortunate."

"I am glad to hear you say even that," said Gordon, "for surely woman should have enough regard for her own sex that she would seek to save the lost, or at least lend a helping hand. Some might profit by the experience of the artist who was called upon

to paint an exact likeness of Alexander the Great. In one of the battles Alexander had received an ugly scar on the side of his face. The artist was compelled to paint a true likeness, but he very charitably concealed the scar upon the man's face by painting Alexander in a reflective attitude, his forefinger resting against his head and at the same time covering up the scar. So with the spirit of the artist, woman might charitably cover up the scars in the lives of many others, and yet be true to her mission."

"Charity might possibly cover up faults, but when a young woman has thrown away precious opportunities for the pleasures of the world, one is apt to lose patience and forget charity," continued Miss Pierce.

"Not if you clearly understood all," quickly added Helen, "for you above all others should have charity for me. You often misjudge, because you do not understand."

Miss Pierce began to grow restless, and had she not dreaded the idea of appearing rude to Gordon, she would have left at the very beginning of the conversation. But, being in the Church, and having heard that morning of the duty of the Church toward even the chief of sinners, she could not well leave this call of God. Hence, she could do no otherwise than speak to one who had so strangely crossed her path.

"No one understood me," continued Helen pitifully. "I was all alone in the world. I was like the ship at sea on a dark night without a compass. Where was I to go? It seemed for a time I must simply drift on to the inevitable death. The awful whirlpool was before me and behind me were the very wolves of censure and unmerciful condemnation. At last, in despair, I fell upon my knees, and with my eyes heavenward, I prayed to God for help in this, my utter extremity. 'Oh, God, pity me, a poor wretched sinner,' I cried, and that night, just outside the church door, as I knelt in prayer, I seemed to hear the still, small voice saying to me: 'Daughter, thy sins are forgiven thee, go and sin no more.' I then arose, and with the awakening of my soul, I realized that I was a changed being. Thus, God has mercifully forgiven me. But you —are one of my own sex; once you were a pretended friend, but now you would pass me by unnoticed. Has not God been merciful unto you, or have you been one that never needed forgiveness? Having received mercy, should you not give the same to others?"

As Gordon listened, it seemed as if some unseen power had taken hold of him, for her words were graven deeply upon his heart. A look of deep feeling passed over his countenance.

"Miss Russel," said he, "it is easy to condemn, but it is better for the heart to pity. Your face tells me that you are deserving of a friend, and being conscious of your need of such, I wish here and now to offer you my own services in any way that may be helpful to you."

"Like many a foolish girl," said Helen, "I once thought I had a true friend in the person of one who flattered me and loved me for my beautiful face. Instead of at once refusing to listen to his tempting words, I foolishly smiled at his flatteries, and accepted his gifts, thereby allowing myself to fall into his clutches, to my own shame and ruin. Now he has cast me out into the cold world, and I am friendless. Hence, I feel the need of a friend and therefore appreciate the interest you manifest in my welfare."

"But why don't you call upon the friend just referred to?" asked Miss Pierce.

"Because," replied Helen, "sin's friends are not true friends, otherwise I should not be to-day almost friendless and penniless in a strange city."

Miss Pierce pretended in her life to be interested in the salvation of others, and yet she was now allowing a soul to suffer. Like her, many are anxious to do great things while souls are slipping by down to destruction—

"Lost for want of a word,
A word that one might have spoken."

Accordingly Helen received only reproach, for when she spoke of the treachery of the friends of the world, Miss Pierce replied:

"Then you expect help from Christians when the world forsakes you?"

"Yes, and she has a right," put in Gordon, "for one object of Christianity is to care for the poor, the widows and orphans in their affliction, and thus win them to a higher life. But often a poor, unfortunate woman receives tokens of love and sympathy from sources whence she would least of all expect them."

Such unexpected remembrances are not uncommon in life. Just before Marie Antoinette was led from her prison cell to execution, an actress, who at the time was a prisoner like Marie, sent her a white robe to wear to execution instead of her prison-worn garments of mourning. That small token of pity and sympathy from an unexpected source sent a ray of sunshine to the heart-broken queen, and for the moment this solitary sign of human sympathy reanimated her heart and gave her a little fresh life. Marie could well appreciate the significance of the white robe, for to her it was emblematic of the joy with which she bade adieu to earth. And, too, she could all the

better face the awful ordeal, the cold steel that hung suspended to take her life, for with this remembrance from even a prisoner she was assured that there was at least one person in all the world that cared for her. There were others, doubtless, who were weeping at their homes for the unfortunate queen, but the queen was unconscious of such facts, even were they true. What she needed was a visible sign of sympathy, otherwise she could not be encouraged. Like her, Helen seemed to be receiving pity from sources whence she might not reasonably expect it; while from such as she looked to for pity, she received only contempt.

No wonder when thus held in contempt by Miss Pierce that Helen answered her, saying:

"Even dogs receive more than that from their mistresses, and surely, one of your own sex should receive some measure of kind consideration, for God knows the power of tears, the magic of sympathy, to one like myself. It is indeed such tenderness that calls a despairing world to its better self."

"Well, I am glad I do not have any mark upon me whereby I should be compelled to plead for sympathy," replied Miss Pierce.

"It is but human nature to hate people who show us that we are little; but I do not

hate you. The thought of what I have been keeps me from that."

As the removal of a stone from a wall may open up a dark chasm in which is buried out of sight a mass of debris, so one look, one word of scorn, may open up a discussion that unlocks sealed doors, and lays open to view things most undesirable to behold. Accordingly Miss Pierce, by her cutting words, brought upon herself more than she had expected to hear.

"You say," continued Miss Pierce, "that you cannot hate me, but you feel sorry for my lack of Christian forbearance. I just wish to say that I do not need your sympathy."

"Perhaps you do, but do not know it. Besides, I thought you as a Christian woman would wish to help redeem the fallen, and give to a repenting sinner a word of encouragement instead of discouraging one who would now do good."

"How can I possibly give you any encouragement?"

"I acknowledge I have not graced my own sex by my past, yet, let me say to you that you are far from being faultless to your true self as God made you."

"What do you mean by such insinuating remarks? I desire you to understand that I have always graced the name of woman."

"In a sense, perhaps you have, but in another you have not."

"In what manner have I not been true to womanhood?"

"You profess to be a follower of God, whose command is that you go forth to 'seek and save the lost.' Yet, when an opportunity to do so is thrust in your way, you turn your back on it."

"That may be your way of looking at things, but we dare not welcome persons like yourself in the society of the Church, for you would cause unhappy remarks to be made about the Church for receiving such into its fold."

"And yet, is it not true, that, when the King of Glory passed through the uplifted gates into Paradise, his sole companion from earth was one saved thief, and the King was not ashamed of his company? Then too, Miss Pierce, you seem to forget that there are many in the Church who are there only in name."

"Of course there are a few Judases, but you must remember you are speaking to a Christian, and my father is noted for the good he has done, a man respected most highly by all who know him."

At these last words Helen started to her feet, her eyes fixed upon the woman's face. She appeared to be battling with a feeling that was getting the mastery over her. Her

very hands trembled, as she heaved a deep sigh. Gordon noticed something amiss, and quickly said:

"Miss Russel, what is wrong?"

She sank to her seat.

"Oh, nothing," she panted. "I only gave way to a nervous feeling. I am all right now again."

"I suppose, Gordon, she became confused because I spoke of my father as being so highly respected, for of course Helen naturally dislikes him because he for some time past has not required her services at the office, and no doubt she feels bitter about it."

"Yes, I do feel grieved, and most grievously wronged," replied Helen in tones whose accent meant more than the words she uttered.

"Well, I am sure you have no cause for being angry at my father, for he has always paid you your salary."

"Yes, and more than my salary."

"Then why should you complain? few men pay their employees more than their salary."

"There are others beside myself who have been paid extras, and who have been given many other things in addition. There is much done that could not stand the test of public examination, and much is said that it would not be well to repeat. Many

a one like myself has been exposed to insults from sources that you, least of all, would suspect, and for fear of losing a position, the ear must often be as if it heard not, and the eye as if it did not see."

"You speak very strangely," said Miss Pierce, "I do not understand your remarks."

"No, I don't suppose you do."

"But what do you mean to imply? I don't quite like the way in which you speak, for, a stranger not knowing my father and hearing you, might be left with a wrong impression."

"I will say this," said Helen, "if you properly understood all, you would not only pity me, but would even mercifully love me."

"There is no reason why I should 'mercifully love' you, even though I may be willing to pity, for I think I pretty well understand you."

"I fear you do not, for being alone in a strange city without friends or any one to give me good counsel, I was soon eyed by one whom at the time I thought a gentleman. Fruits and candies, flowers and wine suppers, drives and flatteries, were all lavished upon me by that very person, until at last I was as the dove in the clutches of the lion. Thoughtlessly I yielded to the voice of the tempter, and I fell."

Helen paused a moment as if to gain mastery of herself, then continued in a strained

voice, "I will tell you a bit of history that you have never before known, which will explain to you just why you do not understand me."

"And what is that history, pray?"

"It is that of the man who blasted the hopes of my life."

"What is his name?"

"It was your own father," replied Helen, as she looked the young lady in her eyes. "It was he who gave me the beautiful flowers at the close of the day as I left his office. He it was who quietly took me out driving at nights. He it was who ordered me wine suppers and shared the same with me. He, who all the while held a position of honor in the Church, and a place of high respect in society. Naturally at first I felt perfectly safe in his company, never suspecting he was using religion merely as a cloak, until when too late I discovered him a hypocrite and myself a ruined girl. Now he goes along as if nothing had happened, and the world believes him a gentleman and a Christian, while I am looked down upon as a wretched sinner, even by his own daughter."

While Helen was speaking, the girl's face became deadly pale. Her eyes rested upon her father's pew in the church. Rising from her seat she brushed away a few tears, and taking Helen by the hand, said, "I do humbly beg your pardon for my conduct to-

ward you. I never understood. I have always blamed you, but now I pity and love you, and I myself feel humiliated."

"You need not," replied Helen, in a voice that told of a heart of sympathy, "for what I have just now said is said once for all, never more to be repeated. It is for your sake that I have kept this secret."

"May we then part friends?" asked Miss Pierce.

"Yes," replied Helen, "I have been forgiven of God, and in turn I forgive and will try to forget."

"Good-bye, Helen, and may God bless you some day for your forgiving spirit; for instead of my wanting to pass you by unnoticed, it would have been more becoming for you to have acted thus toward me, so that after all you have acted the better part of the two. You have taught me a lesson, neither to boast concerning my own position in life, nor to judge another severely without first understanding."

"And, Gordon, I hope you will please excuse me," added Miss Pierce as she bowed and left the church.

Unfortunately for the lady she forgot to speak "that which is good to the use of edification." As the warm rays of the sun kiss the frozen earth, which was bound up with the images of death and the cold breath of the north, and cause the waters to break

from their enclosures and melt with joy, running off into useful channels, so speech, when warmed by true divine sympathy, melts the heart of the sorrowing, and opening up the icy channels of grief, sends forth streams of joy, comfort and gladness.

In many a heart there is frozen music, which, under the warm beams of encouragement, would melt into a sweet song.

There was a deep silence for a moment or two as the lady walked away. Neither Gordon nor Helen seemed willing to speak first, for somehow or other each felt sorry for what had taken place.

Then Helen raised her eyes and said, "I felt very sorry for her, but she forced from me that which I had never intended to reveal. However, in the future it may cause her to be more merciful and charitable."

"I too, am sorry for her," said Gordon, "for the poor girl cannot be blamed for the sins of her father."

"For her sake," replied Helen, "I vowed to keep it a secret, for woman is too frequently held responsible for the sins of others. Yet men are largely to blame for many of the mistakes of young women."

"In what way?" asked Gordon.

"Well," said Helen, "men seem to be attracted often by appearances rather than by real merit. Unless a girl is dressed richly, many young men pass her by with scarce a

recognition, but when she appears finely dressed, she seems to be doubly attractive, and as a result there is a desire for a good appearance."

"And, yet, while that may be true with some, it is no excuse for a woman to sacrifice her honor for dress, for I know those whose garb might provoke laughter at a public ball, yet, under whose old-fashioned bonnets are faces illumined with a faith that makes them beautiful. And, Miss Russel, most men when settled down in life prefer a wife to a butterfly."

"Then you blame me solely!"

"No, Miss Russel, for you were but one of two who did wrong."

"But do you not sympathize with me?"

"Certainly I do, for while it is human to err, it is divine to forgive, and as I have already said, I do feel very sorry for you and mean to do all that is in my power to help you to wholly redeem yourself, that you may yet become a blessing in the world. And I also wish to prove to you that while there are some few deceivers in the Church, there are very many others who are true and devout."

"Yes, Mr. Ronaldson, it is no fault of the Church, but rather a compliment, for men are apt to counterfeit only such things as are good. Nor will the mercy of the true followers of God encourage the sinner in

wrongdoing. To be forgiven by both God and man, is no encouragement for evil-doers to continue their wickedness. The remorse of such as have yielded to temptation is that which makes themselves a hell. Mistaken indeed are those who, enjoying worldly pleasures, think they can secure themselves against being led on too far. Many are like foolish moths, fluttering around the flame which is to dazzle and consume them. For these there is apparently no justification, and but very little apology to offer. And yet, even these are not worthy of the treatment they meet with, either from their own sex, and much less from men, for many are suffering most intensely from bitter remorse."

"Doubtless many do, and yet I have often thought that many are so hardened in sin that they have neither conscience nor feeling."

"Don't mistake, for as a woman I know much, not only from my own experience, but from others who have been even more unfortunate than myself."

The world is apt to fancy many reveling in the "enjoyment" of wicked pleasures, being lost to all sense of remorse and shame. But this is not the fact. No one but the transgressor knows of all the agony and grief and torture endured before the fallen reach their degradation. There is the vain

struggle to retrieve the first false, fatal step. The reproaches of the future hang down with all the power of destiny, while the very dreams of the past haunt the unfortunate in the night watches, driving them on to the verge of madness.

"Oh, that the world might hear me plead for the young women of the land," added Helen, "that the careless might take more heed to their ways, and not yield to the snares of vanity, nor to the flatteries of the worldly-minded!"

"But when such repent, God most graciously forgives them," replied Gordon, with a look of sympathy.

"That is all very true, Mr. Ronaldson, but it is no encouragement to the evil-doer. The man who indulges in revelry and in a drunken stupor falls under a car and loses his arm, may afterward repent, but, although God may mercifully pardon him, nevertheless, that man never gets back his arm."

"I see your argument," replied Gordon, "but had never before looked at it in just that manner."

"Ah, yes, there is no earthly encouragement for wrongdoing, but many learn only when too late. There are painful as well as pleasant memories, but when one has abused the privileges of the home; when one recalls the trees under whose shade she frolicked, and of whose fruit she ate; the

streams that meandered through the meadow; the hills and groves over which she romped in the sunny days of childhood; the old oaken bucket and ancestral walls that yet stand as monuments of the past; when life is so different now from what it was then; when the innocent childhood of my own being rises up before me; when

> "Pensive memory lingers o'er
> Those scenes to be enjoyed no more,"

and recalls others dark and appalling,

> "Those scenes regretted ever—"

how dark and painful indeed are the shadows which sweep over the penitent spirit!"

Gordon appeared greatly affected at her words of penitence, and her pangs of sorrow, and wishing to express a word of encouragement, said, "Miss Russel, painful as must be some of the recollections of the past, nevertheless, it is never too late to do good, and God only knows your future may atone for all the past, and home may yet be bright."

"It is very kind in you to think so, but remember—

> "I am far from the home that gave me birth,
> A blight is on my name;
> It only brings to my father's hearth
> The memory of shame;
> Yet, oh! do they think of me to-day,
> The loved ones lingering there;

Do they think of the unfortunate,
And breathe for me a prayer?
That early home I shall see no more,
And I wish not there to go,
For the happy past may naught restore—
The future is but woe.
But 'twould be a balm to my heavy heart
Upon its dreary way,
If I could think I have a part
In the prayers of home to-day!"

Time was passing by, and to the surprise of Gordon, the hour had come for the adjournment of the Sunday-school, which always met in the lecture room immediately at the close of the church services.

Gordon walked home with Helen to her lodging place, where they resumed the conversation, which had been discontinued at the church.

"Miss Russel," said Gordon, "since God has forgiven you and you are now a professed follower of His, why do you still feel so keenly your pardoned sins? You know when God forgives He says, 'Their sins will I remember against them no more forever.' You should therefore be as honest to yourself as God is toward you, and forget the past, pressing faithfully toward the mark."

"You are inclined to be charitable to me, and that is why you try to comfort me," replied Helen, with a look that told of a heart of appreciation for a kind word received.

"Yes," said Gordon, "I am charitable to

you because, as we all know, there have been lost most precious and valuable jewels, and when found again they were all the more cherished. May it not be so with you?"

The sword may be rusty and bent, but, yet, when melted over again, there may be made from it a most beautiful article, pure and spotless. Like the old sword, many are tarnished and unsightly from the hard blows of the world, but in the hand of the Great Architect of the Universe they become fashioned into instruments of glory and power. For this reason Gordon had learned to greatly esteem Helen, although he never before had an opportunity of expressing that feeling. Now that the opportunity had come, and since he had listened to words of sincerity from her own lips, he was ready to subscribe himself her friend.

The acquaintance between Helen and Gordon gradually developed into friendship, and it was only natural that they began to address each other by their first names. With a look that told of a more kindly feeling, Helen said:

"Gordon, I have noticed your conduct for some time, and I have longed to speak to you in confidence."

Helen somehow felt that there was something in his nature that could be touched

with the feeling of her infirmities. Of course, she dare not so confide in one who was largely a stranger to her, save from the acquaintance at religious services, where he, one of the very few, thought enough to speak to her and invite her back to the services; although at the same time, God had adopted her as one of His own children. There were a few who very kindly spoke to her, assuring her that in them she had a friend, which she most highly appreciated, for it was out of the general order of things, and she ever afterward loved them and prayed upon them God's blessing.

"I thank you very kindly, Helen, for your confidence in me," said Gordon, "for I know the comfort it gives one to confide in another whom he can confidently trust. We all need a friend, and the road is never too long that leads to the home of a friend. But, unhappily, much that passes for friendship is only a mockery. Friendship sums itself up in another's growing popularity, while doubt is the thorn that mars the rose of friendship. But how often does doubt enter, like a wedge, separating once loving friends. Doubt often leads to jealousy, and could the origin of most crimes be duly traced, at the root would be found the worm jealousy."

"Yes," replied Helen, as the tears rolled down her cheeks, "jealousy drove me away

from home, launching me forth upon the great sea of life at the mercy of God and man."

Alas! jealousy has broken up many a home. It has parted many a happy wife and husband, for it often so happens that the first firebrand thrown upon the marriage altar is that of jealousy. Jealousy is thus found in the home, in the Church, in business life, in political spheres, everywhere.

"But strange to say," added Helen, "few persons ever admit that they are of a jealous nature."

"The reason for that," replied Gordon, "is because jealousy is such a wretched monster that no one wants to be known with the monster in his or her heart, notwithstanding the fact that many are daily fostering and nurturing this dreadful demon in their very bosom. It often begins with seemingly innocent love, and appears harmless, but if it is in any way encouraged, it sends forth a parasitic growth like the Yaguey plant that soon covers the life proper of its victim, crushing out all life and devotion, until at last self is gone and the monster, jealousy, stands in its place."

"That has been illustrated in my own home," said Helen. "A jealous enemy, one of my own sex, and one who pretended to be my dearest friend, threw the firebrand into

my home and increased the jealousy of a father, who, although he loved me, yet it was with a selfish love, a love unwisely expressed."

"Are your parents still living?"

"Only my father."

With this her eyes filled with tears, and for a moment she buried her face in her hands, and then, with child-like confidence, she said, "Gordon, an inner voice whispers to me that I shall trust you, and yet, my past experience has been so unfortunate that I am rather loath to trust myself to any man. One sad experience makes one more or less suspicious of all, even though it be one who means to be a true friend."

"However, Helen, it is not right to regard all as deceivers because some are."

"No, that is true, and I feel that in your presence I am in the presence of a friend."

"You are indeed," he said. "Tell me, if you will, all about your troubles."

"They may all be told in a few words," she replied. "My mother died while I was yet a babe. I was placed in charge of an unsympathetic servant."

"You are certainly, then, deserving of much charitable consideration, for while you have in times past erred, you have doubtless erred through ignorance. So far as real character was concerned, you were left as weak as a child, and a child's error always

receives more sympathy than a strong man's folly. But I beg of you that you return home to your father, even though there be no mother to welcome your return. Remember, he awaits your return."

"Ah, Gordon, would there were a happy home for me, and a loving father awaiting my return; but while my father may have a heart of love for his only daughter, he has not been judicious. His was an unrevealed love to me."

"And, yet," interrupted Gordon, "we must not always judge a parent by outward signs, for often at heart they are full of love when their actions might leave a different impression. Love of a child often causes rebuke. There is a possibility of a father not allowing his child to know how much he really loves that child, and in after years children frequently learn that a father's sternness was meant in love."

"That may all be very true, but to me love unrevealed and unexpressed is not love at all to a child. My father's love was of a severe nature, unsympathetic and unwise in its demands."

"While I sympathize with you, Helen, nevertheless, we must not condemn our parents, but rather honor them, for you know they did so much for us at a time when we were unconscious of the real meaning of love. And even though they may have

made mistakes, perhaps we would have made even more had we been in their place. You know, Helen, it is so easy to blame our parents for our own mistakes."

"You have doubtless had good parents and that is why you cannot appreciate the trials of others less fortunate."

"I had, although at one time I did not appreciate the opportunities of a good home. However, I do realize the fact that children have rights which deserve kind consideration, and no doubt there is much in your experience that would but naturally appeal to one's sympathy."

"Yes, Gordon, while I would not shift the blame upon the shoulders of another, yet, I sometimes think if things had been otherwise at my home, perhaps to-day my experience would be very different. Although no one else can take the place of a good mother in the home, yet, a judicious father can largely fill up the gap if he will."

These last words seemed to tell of a weakness on the part of Helen's father, for her eyes were moistened with tears.

"I hope you had a kind father," said Gordon.

"Yes, but——," and here she paused as she dropped here eyes toward the floor, and for a moment appeared in deep thought.

"But what?" asked Gordon.

"Oh, well," she replied, "you know some

fathers are careless in certain matters. No doubt my father meant all right, and perhaps I was all wrong, nevertheless, at the time he did not seem to encourage me very much."

"Perhaps you misjudged him, and did not understand the meaning of his love."

"That may be, but when I should have been wisely cautioned, I was neglected; and when I should have been kindly encouraged, I was rebuked. And added to this, a girl who pretended to be a true friend, was all the while my bitterest enemy. She would encourage me in doing some things which she knew to be displeasing to my father, and because a man who was a friend of hers admired me, she became jealous, and for revenge, would carry tales to my father, fixed up with her own deceitful misrepresentations."

"Oh, these miserable busybodies," said Gordon, "how I do detest them. But why do people listen to such evil-minded persons? However, Helen, it may be that your father has been so influenced by her words as to embitter him against you, his own child."

"No doubt she has poisoned him against me, but should not a parent be willing first to believe his own child before he does the report of another? This is why I have always felt that my father treated me un-

justly, for all my words seemed as nothing to him."

"To think," said Gordon, with a look of contempt, "that an evil-minded person should, through jealousy, try to injure the fair name of another, and separate parent and child. Who could be so base?"

"The name of the woman, Gordon, who pretended friendship, while at heart she was a spy and a traitor, I will not mention. She has gone to meet her reward, and I will not even aid to embalm her name in contempt. Had it not been for her evil tongue, my father would have acted differently toward me and my whole life been one of honor. As it is, I must ever bear the scar and be branded, save in the forgiving love of God and a few friends like yourself."

"What havoc a few words from an enemy may cause, and how a whole life can be changed!"

At this Helen buried her face in her hands and sobbed bitterly, then said, "Gordon, no one knows better than I the awful result of evil reports."

"But why did you leave home, Helen, even though your father did not treat you as kindly as he should have done?"

"Why did I leave? Ah, I was compelled."

Blighted hopes, wounded love, grief and despair, all seem depicted in her face.

"Why, Helen," asked Gordon, "surely no one drove you from home?"

Helen paused, as if undecided how to answer. She did not want to repeat the sad story, and yet, that she might not be misjudged, she felt it but just to herself to give an explanation. Raising her eyes, she said:

"Gordon, I will tell you. One evening my father was out with a number of young men of the world, who reported to him some of the gossip of the pretended girl friend of mine. The intoxicating cup that night helped to excite him, and coming home rather late, he entered the house with curses and oaths. I had already retired, but was awakened by his angry words. I at once knew something was wrong, but never suspected what was in store for me. He came to my room and with a hard knock at the door, he called to me, saying, 'Helen, Helen, leave this house at once, and don't you ever place your foot in it again.' I began to reason with him, but all in vain. I then quickly packed up a small bundle of clothes and stepped out into the dark night."

"What a sad parting it must have been!"

"Yes, worse than death. The door was closed against me, and for a few moments I sat upon the door-sill, thinking that perhaps pity for his child would touch a parent's heart. But no, only the whistling

of the wind came to my ear, while the rain poured down upon me. Then I started I knew not where. At first I was tempted to call at a neighbor's house, and had already stepped up to the door and was about to knock, when I felt ashamed to come there at that hour of the night. On I went along the lonely dark road through the pouring down rain until at last I came to a village. But what was I to do there at that hour of the night? Presently, I heard the coming of the midnight train. In a moment more and it dashed up to the station where I happened to be standing for shelter. Others stepped aboard the train, and I, without thinking, followed after and was soon being carried along at lightning speed toward a great city. I paid the fare and discovered that I had but a few dollars left. But I did not realize how insignificant a few dollars were until once I had landed in this great city. I sought a lodging place, the rent for which I paid one week in advance. This left me with but two dollars. I started forth then in search of employment. But alas, I was friendless as well as almost penniless in a strange city. The first day I searched in vain. Again, the second and third day I went from store to store and from place to place begging for something to do, but all I heard was, 'We have now more workmen than we have work for.' Now

and then some kind and considerate person would say, 'I am sorry for you, but perhaps if you call at Mr. ——— you may be able to secure a position.' I called, but generally was shown the door with little or no sympathy. The end of the week still found me hoping and seeking, but night overtook me only tired and despairing. The last penny had been spent and I was hungry.

"If there was ever a time when I felt

"Alone, alone, all, all alone——"

it was that seventh day of my experience in this city. That evening I told the landlady of my troubles and asked her to bear with me for a day or two, but she told me I must find another room. At this my very nerves gave way. Nowhere to go. No place for employment. No money for food, I felt there was but one place left for me, the river."

"What an experience for a young girl," said Gordon, feelingly.

"Yes, Gordon, I had often read of the opportunities that await all who would honestly seek a living, but that night it seemed to me that while it might be true in fiction and poetry, it was different in actual life. After a night of awful suspense, I arose in the morning with no appetite and nothing to satisfy it if I had been hungry. I began to wonder why I lived. Why not put an end to this despair! I was ashamed to beg;

unwilling to do wrong, and yet, I asked myself the question, What shall I do? Where shall I go? How shall I live? Every door seemed closed against me, and there I was a forlorn mortal without hope. An irresistible temptation overcame me to take my life. Unconsciously I found my feet carrying me to the water's edge. Far out upon the pier I walked and there I stood gazing upon the deep. A plunge and all would be over. I was about to take it when an unseen hand appeared to rest upon my shoulder. It seemed the hand of mother. For the moment I stood breathless. Then the hand seemed to press heavily, bringing me down upon my knees, while a Still, Small Voice whispered, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.'

"Then I prayed to God, saying:

"'Oh, Thou Father in heaven, who hast promised to be with us when our fathers forsake us. Thou who hast in mercy been with Thy people in the past, look down now upon one of Thy unfortunate children, and may Thy everlasting arms bear her up. Oh, save me from despair, and snatch me even now as a brand from the fire. Forgive me wherein I have done wrong, and may my despondent soul hope now in Thee, my only Refuge and Strength. Open Thou a way before me wherein I may walk, and let me yet serve Thee.'

"I arose and the scene before me had changed. I felt as though a great burden had fallen from my soul into the river beside me. I then walked away resolving to follow the guidance of God. As of old the pillar of cloud led the children of Israel by day and the pillar of fire by night, so it seemed the hand of God was now placed within mine, and led me, for within a very short time I found employment, and from that time forward I was mercifully provided for. Had I remained where I believe God placed me, then I would not have the sad experience I to-day must recall. But then I thought I could better myself. I therefore left the place where I had been engaged for quite a time, and was employed in the office of the father of the lady we met in the Church. This, Gordon, is the unhappy sequel to my unfortunate life."

As Gordon listened to her story and saw the sad picture thus portrayed, he more than ever admired the woman before him, and felt it was a providential meeting that morning in the Church. The minister had that morning plead for charity on the part of his people towards sinners, saying of charity that it is—

"The little address in wiping a tear,
The whisper of hope in a desolate ear,
The smile of encouragement given to one
Whom malign degradation had marked for her own.

"The answer that turns away anger and wrath,
The hand that strews roses in misery's path,
The foot that treads softly the chamber of pain,
The gift the giver expects not again.

"The word that is said in an absent one's praise,
Or to save from dishonor, distrust and disgrace.
The thought that would wound, never uttered in jest,
The apology urged, the fault frankly confessed.

"The hiding what others would dislike revealed,
A friend's secret error forever concealed,
And in every transaction that's open to view,
The acting as you'd wish others acted by you."

Recalling these words, he said:

"Helen, yours is a most pathetic tale, and one doubtless that many another unfortunate girl can appreciate. Nevertheless, I believe even at this late day, it will be to your own good to return home. Time changes many things, and who knows but that your father is even now praying to God for you."

"Father praying for me," said Helen in seeming surprise.

"Yes, Helen. He would not be the only father who prays for his children. We too often blame our fathers for things they do not deserve. We should rather think of a father's love and prayer for his child."

"And do you think father still loves me?"

"I believe so," replied Gordon. "It is said," he continued, "that an angel was

once on this earth, and on his return to heaven he took along with him a little flower, a baby's smile and a mother's love. When he reached heaven and was about to enter the pearly gates he discovered that the flower had withered; that the smile had faded away, but the mother's love was even more beautiful and sacred than before. At this the angel threw aside the withered flower, the faded smile was forgotten, but the mother's love remained."

"Oh, for a mother's love," exclaimed Helen, "but poor, miserable me, I am left in this great world without it, and scarcely ever knew its meaning, so far as my own practical experience is concerned."

"But, Helen," said Gordon, "I was just about to add, that while a mother's love is so lasting, that a father also loves long and mercifully, and it may be thus in your own experience."

"I fear it is too late. Father might only close the door in my face."

"Helen, there have been many separations and some parents have declared they would never look upon the face of their child again, and yet, the time came when they were only too glad to welcome back home their son or daughter. There is something deep down in the heart of parents that prevents them from forgetting their child, even though they would be so in-

clined to do. How can a mother forget her child? And how can a father forget his only daughter? Would not his memory carry him back to the time when he caressed her as an innocent child, and although she may have strayed from the straight and narrow path, is she not still his daughter?"

This sort of persuasion caused Helen to become serious in her thoughts of home.

"Gordon," said Helen, as she looked into his face, "I shall never be able to repay you for what you are to me. You seem more than a mere friend; even more than a brother. Indeed, I dare not speak my thoughts at this moment, for they are freighted with love."

"Speak not of 'repaying,' for I have long since been repaid for all that I may ever be able to do. In fact, I have been repaid for all the good I may ever be able to do in this world. Besides, Helen, I feel I have done but very little in proportion to what I should have done. Usually we love because another first loved us. God has long ago paid us for all the good we may ever be able to do for Him, and His people in doing good, are but employing the God-given talents. Many have need of learning a new definition of religion, for it means more than merely singing praises to God."

"That would be an easy way of getting

to heaven on 'flowery beds of ease,'" interjected Helen.

"God is best praised and pleased when we do good unto others. Tears of sympathy are often very consoling to those who mourn, while the soft and cool hand upon the fevered brow of those who are sick, and the breath of hope and love to the oppressed, do much toward glorifying God."

"Yes, and toward blessing mankind," added Helen.

Too many are like the Dead Sea, which only receives and nothing gives, save that which is deadly. A child best pleases its parents not by singing praises to the parent and telling of the good qualities, but by faithfully serving the parent. And so we best please God, not by merely praising Him, but by doing Him services of mercy and love in the alleviation of the woes of humanity.

The dinner hour came, and Gordon left for his home, with a pressing invitation from Helen to call again.

Gordon was quite anxious to know Helen's mind in reference to her decision as regards returning home. He therefore called the next evening to see her. As he entered her apartment she exclaimed: "Oh, Gordon, I am so glad you have come, for I had intended making a call, but an experi-

ence that occurred on the way changed my course."

"If I am not too inquisitive, what was that experience?"

"As I passed a house I saw at an open window an old man, apparently deep in thought. The look on the man's face at first startled me, for it reminded me of my father. Then occurred to me the thought, that perhaps my father at that very moment might be seated at the open window, looking out into the dark, wondering where his daughter was. With that picture before me, and recalling your words, Gordon, I then and there resolved to go home."

"I am glad of that."

"Yes," she continued, "it seemed as if some hand had been placed in mine, leading me by that very residence so that I might see that man's face and thereby be reminded of my father. I am going back to him, but——" she hesitated.

"What is it, Helen?"

"I sometimes wonder," she said, blushing deeply, "how I shall ever live without your friendship."

This sudden expression of affection was a great surprise to Gordon, for although he had been very kind to her, yet his was only a brotherly love to one of God's children. He had not meant his attentions should convey the idea of his love to her as a lover.

And yet, he could well see how she might easily have mistaken kindness for affection. It was all the more painful to him, because he still loved Janet.

But how should he tell this to Helen? He had learned to greatly value her as a friend, and it would be very difficult to tell her that he was only a friend.

He decided to ignore any deep meaning in her last remark.

"You have decided most wisely," said he, after a pause, "and although we may never see each other again, yet remember that whenever you feel the need of a friend, Gordon Ronaldson will be ready to render such assistance as may be necessary, so far as it lies in his power."

Helen's words and manner were almost too much for Gordon, for even though he had been but a friend to Helen, showing her kindness rather than affection, yet her life thus brightened and wholly transformed into beauty and sincerity had, in a measure, appealed to his more tender nature of love, which is a large blanket and covers a large space. To Gordon, therefore, this was a Rubicon in his life, and one not easy to pass. Sometimes it is very hard to say "No," even though the word has in it one letter less than "Yes." Gordon, however, was a man of calm judgment, and one of true devotion and affection. While he ad-

mired Helen, he saw between her and Janet a great difference so far as his real affection for either was concerned.

At last he broke the almost death-like silence that had fallen after this frank confession, and said: "Helen, you have often heard me speak of Janet Morton. To her belongs the glory of my honor and success in life, and although we have long since not seen each other, and perhaps never may, nevertheless I am true to her. But to you, Helen, I wish ever to remain a friend. For when Janet and I separated, I promised her that I would at least make some one person happy, and I mean to keep my promise."

"Gordon, I hope you will pardon me this momentary weakness. I had no right to misinterpret kindness for affection. But you know the two are easily confounded. Besides, it was all the more inspired within me because of your coming so unexpectedly to-night. But I shall, perhaps, some day need you as a friend, and so I most gratefully accept your kind offer. In the meantime, I shall return home, and should God so decree that in the future the paths of Janet and yourself cross, give her a forgiven sinner's love; for I perceive that after all I owe something to her whom I have never seen, because of her holy influence in and through you."

These last few words greatly moved

Gordon. Helen noticed this and asked why he was so moved. "Is it not true," she said, "that to this woman you spoke of belongs partly the good you have done me because of her good influence over you?"

"Yes," replied Gordon, "now for the first time I can appreciate clearly her words to me a long time ago, when she told me to be good not only for my own sake, but for the good I might do others. At that time it seemed to me but idle talk, but as the years roll on I discover more and more our responsibility toward our fellow-men in moulding their character by our example and influence. I thank God for her, who not only set for me an example, but by her very life and words, has enabled me to do something for others."

"Gordon, to-morrow I shall leave this city with a prayer for the safety and preservation of the unwary, and a blessing on you for your very many kindnesses toward me, who am unworthy of so much consideration."

After a few more words, he took her by the hand, saying: "Good-bye, Helen; should circumstances require, send me word, and I shall be ready to help you."

That night when Gordon returned home, a little later than usual, he found his father asleep. But he could not sleep himself.

His thoughts carried him back several years, and he began to wonder where Janet might be.

The exposure of Rose during the three days when she was lost in the mountains, brought on a wasting disease which lasted until shortly after her return that summer from the mountains, when the death angel entered the home of Mr. and Mrs. Morton and took away the little child. The flower was plucked from the garden of their home to be transplanted by the angels in the Garden of God in heaven. The parents, to perpetuate the sweet memory of their child, erected a church in the humbler portion of the city in which they lived, and called it the "Rose Memorial." It thus stood like the memorial that the Great Teacher appointed for the woman who had anointed Him with the precious ointment, the injunction that wherever in all the world His Gospel should be preached, her loving service should be told "as a memorial of her." And so it has been. The memorial thus built by them is better than any ever built out of cold marble for the cities of the dead, for their "Rose Memorial" lives in the hearts of many men and women and children. Hundreds of poor children are there instructed in such things as are important for their temporal and spiritual welfare. Thus the death of Rose proved instrumental in

bringing life to many children who might otherwise have lived in sin and spiritual death. So it often happens that even the infant, whose existence is limited to but a few days, may come to fulfil an important mission.

It was immediately after the erection of this memorial to the memory of their child, that Mr. and Mrs. Morton, to break off all thought of Gordon Ronaldson from the mind of Janet, took her abroad, and Gordon knew not where she was.

Time may appease suffering and sorrow, and in the lapse of years we may partly forget the past, but now and then thoughts of by-gone days flash across the memory and we stand once more in the presence of the past. And so it was with Gordon. In quick succession a series of scenes long forgotten were resurrected and for the time being he forget the present.

Were these, perhaps, thoughts of sympathy as echoed in the heart of one abroad, Janet Morton? Was she, perhaps, at this moment thinking of him whom she had learned to esteem so highly and even love?

Could he have known something which he did not know, Gordon would perhaps have understood the better his own thoughts, for Janet not only lived, but Gordon lived in her heart.

Courted by a host of admirers, Janet was

unavoidably in society, and there became the favorite of many. Thus she apparently forgot all about the past in the delights of the present. Obedient to a parent's command, she bore her bitter disappointment without complaint, and never referred to Gordon.

When, however, she made the acquaintance of many of the leading men of society, she discovered many weaks points in all. She could not help comparing them in her mind to Gordon, and by that contrast their weaknesses were the more apparent.

Melville Ashton was one whom Mr. and Mrs. Morton had seemingly singled out for their son-in-law. They placed their daughter in his company as if by chance for a long time before she was conscious of what was going on. Finally Janet discovered that he was a wooer for her hand, but although she had for a time enjoyed his favors, nevertheless she could not learn to love him. Melville was wholly a man of the world, and pleasure and frivolity were his very life. He was in possession of quite a fortune, and lived as though he would never be able to spend it all.

When, therefore, he asked Janet to become his wife, she answered him, saying: "Mr. Ashton, have you ever thought of what is required to establish a home, and to make

of it the abode you perhaps hopefully anticipate?"

"No, not specially," replied Melville.

"Then, sir, you have no right to ask a woman to join you in the establishing of a home. Too many picture the subject of marriage with the golden hue of Eden with no thought of what is to follow. The nobler thought is frequently forgotten. Eden is but the beginning of mutual work in a life of duty and love. The doctrine of selfishness is so deeply rooted in the thoughts of many that they seem to think that their minds are to be solely set on worldly pleasures and advantages. But, Mr. Ashton, unless the husband is willing to do his part in the home, then as well expect a bird to fly with a broken wing as to expect of the wife alone to do all the work of home-building."

"What is your idea of home?" asked Melville, rather curiously.

"Very different from that of the wild beast of the forest," replied Janet. "To such," she continued, "home means but a place of rest and contentment, a place in which to sleep off an over-gorged appetite, a place of security, where the eye and ear can be off guard. But my idea of home is that of a place which rises higher into the spiritual until it foretastes the home 'not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'"

"You have a lofty conception of home."

"So I have, Mr. Ashton, and it were well for all to consider it in that same sacred light, but do you know that it is men like yourself who are largely to blame for many of the unhappy marriages of to-day?"

"How so, Miss Morton?"

"Because many of you encourage young women in becoming mere devotees at the Shrine of Pleasure—a gilded butterfly sipping nectar from every flower. To receive the flatteries of such men, many young girls are lured away from the noble duties of true womanhood. If young men would insist more upon character and the proper training of girls under the guidance of excellent mothers as a condition of proposal for marriage, then there would be fewer frivolous women and more happy homes."

"That is just why I have asked for your hand," replied Melville.

"After all, Mr. Ashton, was it not rather my face that attracted you. Did you really stop to consider whether there was that in my life which would attract without it?"

"To be honest, Miss Morton, I must say that it was your pretty face that appealed to me, together with your winning ways in society. But why should you condemn a man for admiring a pretty face? The possession of it does not prove of itself that its owner has no good moral or mental qualities. On the other hand, it often ac-

companies a mind and heart which are made in the same image."

"That is very true, and yet, you for one at least confess that you cared for me chiefly on account of what to you appears a pretty face. Suppose you should ever marry such a woman and afterward sickness destroy her good looks, then how about your love for her?"

At this Melville dropped his eyes to the floor and for the moment felt condemned.

"No, Mr. Ashton," continued Janet, "you would then be disappointed like many others who marry only for looks."

"Not if I married you," quickly added Melville.

"Perhaps not, but I am not in a hurry to take that step. Besides, there are other considerations."

"And what are they? Have I not always shown you courtesies?"

"Yes, but the fact that a man is well qualified for a ball-room does not say he is a woman's ideal of a husband. In fact, Mr. Ashton, you are too fond of the frivolities of life ever to make a good husband."

"Ha, you are turning moralist?" said Melville.

"As a young woman, why should I not, when so many are treading upon dangerous soil."

Charles Dickens tells of a woman whose

nature was so depraved, that in that woman's nature you might enter in and go down a long corridor or passage, and go up a flight of stairs, and up along another corridor, before you would come to a little door, where you would find the word "Woman." Janet had a more lofty conception of woman. To her God had made woman so pure and noble that she stands forth a miracle of grace from the hand of God. But to preserve that work of Divine Art, Janet realized the need of wrapping close about her the mantle or armor of modesty. Clad in that armor, she would need fear no evil, but could travel through the very fiery furnace of sin and iniquity and come forth only purified by the experience.

Melville failed to appreciate Janet's serious idea of life, and turning to her said:

"Miss Morton, this world is large and you are too young to be so settled in your ideas. I believe in enjoying life while we can."

"Many others have thought the same, and in order to keep up their mode of living, have robbed their own friends; but at the very time when least expected, the detective was tracking them and they were prisoners."

"Oh, yes, of course," added Ashton, "there are some persons who are too stupid to cover up successfully their tracks, but as

for me, I intend to get the best out of life, 'eating, drinking and being merry' while I can, and take my chances in regard to the future."

"In doing so, Mr. Ashton, don't be surprised if some day you happen to reap tears and remorse, for 'as a man sows, so shall he also reap.'"

"Oh, I've heard others say the same, but that doesn't worry me. You had better do as many others, who are getting so very much more out of life than you are."

"I beg leave to differ with you. Such as are careless of their influence over others, to say nothing of their own peril, are not getting more out of life than those who are careful, and many of you very young men will sooner or later realize the truth of my assertion."

"And do you mean to imply that one shall have no pleasure?"

"No, Mr. Ashton, for God intends that we enjoy lawful amusements. A woman who laughs and sings, plays and enjoys life's innocent pleasures, is not to be condemned. But when she dines on pleasures, and seeks nothing but pleasure, then pleasure becomes her very god, the atmosphere of her existence. Such a woman misses the high calling of life, for 'She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.'"

"But where would you draw the line?" asked Mr. Ashton.

"I surely would draw it this side of a life that spends almost every night in mere worldly enjoyment, for time is too precious to waste in that manner. Besides, Mr. Ashton, you might otherwise be able to do a considerable amount of good with your opportunities, which would in the end give you so much more genuine satisfaction. The careless in life are running terrible risks. When Walter Scott was on his death-bed, he called Lockhart to his side, and said: 'My dear, I have but a moment to speak with you; be a good man, be religious, for nothing else will give you any peace when you come to lie here.'"

"Well, some of us are willing to take our chances."

"Young men are too often lured on blindly by the voice of the tempter without first stopping to consider the end of the pleasure they are about to indulge in, and perhaps you may be one of them. The world offers the best first, which at first sight often appears to be inviting, but what is the end thereof? Ask many of the wrecks of humanity."

"I am not worrying about the future, I live to enjoy the present."

"So have others. At the time they thought self perfectly secure and feared no

danger of the deep waters which had buried many before them; they felt able to sin just so far, and then stop at their own pleasure, but alas, 'thy rowers have brought thee into great waters,' and as a result many are hopelessly struggling like the sailors with Jonah, to reach the land."

"I'm not afraid of the experience."

"Perhaps not, but you know when once in the current it is not easy to get out of it."

It is easy to drift down the stream with the current, but not so easy to get back against the current. Young men will do well, therefore, to first consider well their steps, lest unconsciously they be carried into "the great waters," for while before them lie the awful rapids of sin and death, behind them will be vanished friends, vanished wealth, vanished health and vanished character, so, like Solomon of old, they will be compelled to say "vanity of vanities." When wrecked of all God-given virtues, man often ends all present misery in a suicide's death, to renew his misery in the life beyond that of the present.

"Miss Morton, you seem to think that every one who indulges in worldly pleasures must afterward pay the penalty. I don't believe it, for I have, as you doubtless know, been having a pretty good time so far in life and am none the worse for it."

"At present, perhaps not, but it may be

well for you to remember that habits are much more easily formed than broken. They become the channel through which our life flows, and the deeper the channel is wrought, the greater is its moulding and controlling influence over the stream. Thus, our habits become our masters, and are the irrevocable rulers of our life."

"Then you mean to say the harvest has not yet come," replied Melville, with an air of indifference.

"Yes, and as a woman, I would be the last one to sow any tares for your reaping," replied Janet rather feelingly. "You know," she continued, "that a woman has a great influence over man either for good or evil, and I never want it said of me that I had been instrumental in the downfall of any man, so that while you may think me rather harsh, yet I am perhaps your best friend in that I would guard you against the first false step, which counts and costs. It may appear to you that your future is a matter of indifference to me, and yet, as an acquaintance, and knowing you as I do, I am sufficiently interested in your behalf to wish you well."

"Why do you wish me well?" asked Melville in seeming surprise.

"Because, Mr. Ashton, we are all debtors. I for one owe much to the memories of the great men and women of the past, whose

works and lives have directly or indirectly been to me a blessing. It may be a book I have read, or a song I have heard, or a bit of kind advice I have received, that helped me and made me what I am, and to all these sources I am debtor. As such, I am responsible for my influence over others and can make the best returns by being helpful to others. Most of all, I owe my decision and stand for that which is right."

"I thank you for your kind interest in my behalf," said Melville rather sarcastically, "but I am exceedingly sorry that you do not have the same confidence in me that your father and mother have."

"You see, daughters do not always think with their parents, nor do they agree with them in all things."

"No," said Melville, "I observe there is at least one daughter who seems to differ most decidedly from her parents, and I am sorry to say, to my very great disappointment."

"I am sorry to have disappointed you, Mr. Ashton," said Janet.

"Miss Morton, you should remember that while a man may have done things that were wrong, he may, nevertheless, after his marriage, live an altogether different life."

"That is a risky piece of business."

"What do you mean?"

"Marrying a man with the expectation of

reforming him afterward. That may all sound very well in poetry or fiction, but in practical life it is different. The man who, before marriage, does not think enough of a lady to give up evil habits, is not very likely to do so afterward."

Melville sat for a moment and carelessly turned over a few pages in a book that was lying on the table near by. With all Janet's severe remarks, he seemed conscious that she was about right, and although he would not confess it, yet he had even now learned to love her more than ever before, for he discovered in her those noble traits of a true woman that were important for the making of a happy home. Just then his eyes happened to meet Janet's, and never before did she look more lovely. She was in herself, though silent, an appeal that a heart of stone could not resist.

Melville gazed silently on her as she sat before him with her long, auburn tresses, which had seemingly never before been so carefuly braided over her polished forehead. Unconsciously she had put forth an effort to enhance every charm and make her beauty irresistible to him. In the eyes of Melville she looked more like a goddess than a being of clay. He resolved, therefore, if possible, to secure the prize of his life.

"Miss Morton," said he, "is there no way

in which I can gain your confidence and esteem?"

For the moment, Melville's look seemed to tell of a heart of love and devotion, which touched a sympathetic cord in the heart of Janet. A pause, and it seemed to Melville that even yet there was a possibility of achieving the fondest dream of his life, Janet's love. For a moment, both sat in silence, seemingly too full of emotion to say anything.

Then Melville broke the silence.

"Will you answer my question?" he asked.

"Mr. Ashton," said Janet, "it may seem rather cruel for me to say 'no' to you, and yet I cannot answer otherwise. I might say that this is not an impromptu answer, for I have been thinking over this for some time, and have concluded that it were better for us to part, and henceforth know each other merely as acquaintances, and not friends."

"I am sorry we ever met," said Melville, "for I would be far happier henceforth had I never known you."

"You must forget all about me," replied Janet.

"That is not always possible."

"Then remember me as the woman who advised you to use the pleasures of the world, but not abuse them," said Janet,

"and also the one who had interest enough in your welfare to tell you of your faults."

"Yes, you have not been at all sparing in the latter."

"Perhaps not, Mr Ashton, and yet all for your own good, and you may yet live to see the day when you will appreciate my words."

"I may, but I must confess that I fail to see the force of your remarks now. However, be it as you will, I bid you good-night."

"Good-bye, Mr. Ashton."

"Thank heaven, I am rid of him," said Janet to herself as he closed the door. "I'll remain single my lifetime," she continued, "rather than marry a man I can't love."

Janet spent a few moments longer in the parlor, and then, turning down the lights, she entered her mother's room, saying, "Well, mother, it is all right."

"Oh, I am so glad, Janet. Now we can announce our daughter as engaged to Melville Ashton, and to-morrow's papers will be full of it. Won't it be just lovely, and to think that at one time you thought of marrying that poor bank clerk. Of course he was a nice fellow, but there is no comparison. Melville is a man who will give you a rich home and carry you about in high circles of society."

"You misunderstand me, mother."

"In what way?"

"Why, I shall never marry Melville Ashton, and I mean to say that it is now all right, and thank heaven, I am free from him."

At this Janet's whole nature seemed to rebel, and throwing herself down upon the couch she said, "Mother, I am tired of this wasting of my whole life; I am doing good to no one, and harm to myself; for to me nothing is more irksome than the frivolities of fashionable life. There is nothing in it. To spend night after night of months and years in the circle and rounds of trivial gaieties, is but exhausting the susceptibilities of enjoyment, so that life itself becomes a burden. And, mother, you know there was a day when I lived a very different life; but to rid me of Gordon Ronaldson, you have brought me to this far distant place and introduced me into this sort of wasteful life. And what is to be the end of it all? Shall I always be able to keep good? Or may not this kind of life lead me away from that which I most highly prize in man or woman, character? Pleasures may be pleasant in themselves for a time, but the great trouble is that there will be a time when one must reap what she has sown, and the girl that sows to the wind must reap the whirlwind."

"Daughter, I don't understand you!"

"Surely, mother," added Janet, "you know your early teaching was different from that of the present, but since prosperity has befallen us, and circumstances have placed us just a little above the better class of people, so far as comforts are concerned, you and father seem to think more of riches than of your daughter's personal welfare. After all, what is there to the life such as I have been living for the past several years? It is hollow and void of all satisfaction to a young woman who has the true conception of what makes life worth the living. There was a time when I loved one who I believed would have been to me a happy companion. He was, you well know, a suitor for my hand, and when he asked me to be his wife, I was compelled to refuse him. Why? Just because he was a man of humble means and working for a moderate salary as a clerk in a bank. But Gordon Ronaldson, although he was not a man of great riches in money, was rich in character, and showed every evidence of making a true success in life. Above all, I believe he truly loved me."

"Pity you didn't marry him," interjected the mother rather unkindly.

"I submitted to your judgment that morning at the hotel in the mountains, and have tried to be a dutiful daughter to you, but what am I now? Nothing more

than a 'society woman.' Doubtless some other young woman has been made happy by Gordon, and is enjoying the affections of one intended for me, for I have always felt as though we were intended for each other."

These words of Janet were a revelation to her mother, who keenly felt the sting of a guilty conscience; for she well remembered that she had been the first to oppose Gordon, and that if she had acted more wisely, her father would not have been so inconsiderate and harsh. But few people like to acknowledge their own mistakes, and so Janet's mother at once began to defend herself, and at the same time to rebuke her daughter.

"Janet," said her mother, "is that all the appreciation your parents are to receive after our many sacrifices and our introducing you into the very best circles of society? And do you mean to say that you are still thinking about Gordon Ronaldson, who has scarcely enough money to live in a small house with but a single servant, when at the same time we have brought to you Melville Ashton, a man worth ten thousand pounds a year, and who will give you a palace to live in? Why, Janet, there is no comparison between the two."

"No, mother, there is truly no comparison between the two, for one I love, while the other I simply recognize as an acquaint-

ance, for I have never had any confidence whatever in Melville Ashton."

"Why have you no confidence in him?"

"Because, mother, a man who idles away his time day after day, without being honestly engaged in business, I have reason to suspect, gains his money in a manner that is not best for his future."

"You are foolish, daughter, for Melville has no need of earning any more money. He has enough without."

"Yes, he has enough if he saved it, but, mother, a man who lives as he does, will soon run through with a very large capital, and possibly in the end do as many others have done before him under like circumstances—forge checks and wrong their own friends."

"Nonsense, daughter; who ever heard of a man of such means as Melville running through all his money?"

"Such cases are of common occurrence."

"But it will never be true of Mr. Ashton, for he is not a man of that kind. I have too much confidence in him, and your father believes him a perfect gentleman in every respect."

"I hope he is, but my mind is fixed, as well as is my heart, and no persuasion can change my decision."

"And do you mean to tell me that you never intend to marry Melville Ashton?" inquired the mother, rather excitedly.

"Marry Melville Ashton! No, never; for even though the world may censure me, and more than that, if I have to bear the full weight of my parents' wrath, rather than perjure my soul, I will not marry that man. I am no angel, God knows, but I try to do right for right's sake, as far as I can see clearly. In this century, it is no easy thing for a young girl to discriminate between right and wrong; for her education does not tend to let her see clearly the right way, but rather to see if she can make a good marriage. The richer the man she marries, no matter what his moral character may be, the greater the world's approbation, and the better she is said to have done. That is the one idea which dominates a young girl now-a-days, but in justice to myself, I will say that it is not so much our fault as our mothers'."

"In what way are we mothers to be blamed?"

"Why, a young girl is hardly emancipated from the school-room, when she is thrown into the society of a young man; then her mother having ascertained his social position, and being assured on that point, marks him for her daughter's husband, and with that end in view, contrives to have him thrown into the girl's society, and praises him highly, seemingly by acci-

dent, but in reality in accordance with carefully made plans. Accordingly, before the girl is really aware of what has happened, she finds herself engaged to that young man, who, if the truth were to be told, she hardly knows. No one stops to think if he is the right man to be trusted with that young, pure life. In fact, no one cares, so long as he is rich and can give her a goodly share of this world's goods; no one thinks it worth while to tell her that mutual love, mutual appreciation and affection are of far more value than worldly goods, large estates, priceless jewels, or even 'ten thousand pounds.' Of course, all mothers are not alike; some have no other end in view than that of their daughter's happiness, and the girls thus blessed are the ones to be blamed if their lives are a failure."

"Have I not always looked to your interest?"

"Not prudently, for, mother, you know you have not acted wisely with me, and while I at one time yielded to please you, I cannot do so now, for this is a step for life, and I have determined not to marry any man whom I cannot thoroughly respect, and whom I cannot say before God, I shall 'love, honor and obey.' If, in after years, I shall ever meet a man worthy of this, then I shall count my life well spent if I am able to make him truly happy, for it is a great and holy

thing to give a human being a foretaste of heaven, as true happiness surely brings; more is not in any one's power."

This positive declaration made by Janet was most conclusive, and she meant just what she said. During all the time when her parents supposed Melville Ashton's visits and attentions were leading on to a marriage with their daughter, they were not so regarded by Janet. She had never before expressed herself either one way or the other, but now that circumstances had changed, she could no longer suppress her feelings, and thus frankly expressed her mind.

"Well, daughter, is Gordon the only man in all this world? Is he the ideal of your life?"

"Yes; he quite meets my ideal."

"Then I hope you may some day realize your ideal, and find some fellow who is the embodiment of those noble traits you have learned so much to admire in Gordon."

"Mother, if you quite understood him as I think I do, then you would not be so unfeeling in your remarks."

"Child as you are, compared with my years of experience, yet, I am sorry I did not let you have your own way, and then, instead of your censuring me, you might be the one to come to me with regrets."

"Mother, I do not wish to censure, for you

are my own true mother, and I will ever love you, even though my life prove miserable. I have the strongest esteem and affection, and I love you for what you have been to me all my life."

"I am glad you feel a little of your old childhood love."

"Not a little, mother, but all; nevertheless, you can readily observe a daughter's feeling, for once you were as I am, unmarried, and no doubt you then thought just a little differently from what you do at present."

"Yes, I have learned from experience, and am more capable of deciding now than then."

"I believe all that, mother, and no doubt you were wholly sincere in what you did."

"Then you won't condemn my maternal affection as contrary to nature?"

"No, mother, only I wish you could just put yourself in my place for a short time, and view the matter from another point of view; for to me Melville is nothing, while Gordon is everything."

By this time the mother began to see that there were two sides to the question, and the more she considered the opposite view to that which she had first taken, the more sympathy she had for her daughter. Although a child may forget its mother, yet, a mother is slow to forget her child, and is

the first to show a heart of love. Her very nature is sympathetic, and her wand is love.

Seeing, therefore, that Janet was not pleased with her former decision, and realizing that perhaps she had made a mistake, she said, "I am very much disappointed, Janet, to have all my plans thwarted, and all my hopes blasted. What I contemplated may not have been wisely designed, but at any rate, it was all done for what I believe to have been the best. However, I realize one thing in your favor."

"What is that?"

"It is that a daughter should, after all, be largely considered in the choice of a husband."

"Yes, mother, for you know the daughter is the one who has to live with the man, and if there is one person to be pleased, surely the daughter is that person."

"It would no doubt always be better if the parents, in their anxiety for their daughter's welfare, would consult her and know the state of her heart toward a man before they counsel."

"Yes, mother, a parent should advise, but not make the match."

"I see my mistake now," replied the mother, "as well as that of your father, who was largely influenced by what I said, and I shall never more interfere with your plans

as regards Gordon Ronaldson, whom you say is a man of character, industry and good habits."

"I am exceedingly sorry, mother, that you did not think so a few years ago, for you know that opportunity is gone. Here, I am in a far distant land and have heard nothing from Gordon, and beside, there is not much probability but that one like him has been married by this time. And even if he has not married, it is most improbable that we shall ever meet again, and if we do the scene of our last separation would at once rise up before him like the mountains at the place we parted, so that he would doubtless pass me by unnoticed."

"No, Janet, first love is not so brittle as all that."

Some one contends that a handsome woman is the perfection of the Creator's work, and assuredly there are few objects in nature more attractive than feminine loveliness. As Janet sat there that night, her eyes sparkling with animation, and her long, heavy locks hanging down gracefully over her shoulders, forming a framework for a beautiful face, she was loveliness personified, and made as fair a picture as could Eve herself, when dreaming over her lost garden home.

As if some bright ray of hope had crossed her mind, she seemed her happy self again,

and said, with a smile, "Mother, I wonder if there is a possibility of ever meeting again with Gordon?"

"Now, don't worry, my child. Things will come out all right in the end. You are yet young and your chances many."

"Don't be too sure of that, for opportunities do not always repeat themselves."

"I am sorry you can't rid yourself of the thought of Gordon, for I do believe you think more of him than of me, your own mother, and would be ready to leave me for him, even if I were in trouble."

These last words seemed greatly to affect Janet, and throwing her arms about the neck of her mother, she said, "I am sorry, mother, that you should for one moment even think that I could ever be so ungrateful as to turn upon you the cold shoulder in a time of need. I confess that there yet remains deep down in my heart a fondness for Gordon. But, mother, granted that he is still alive and unmarried, and that he should again cross my path, and we once more renew the early ties of love; nevertheless, if it came to a test, I would refuse his love and cling to you, did you need my attention."

"And remain unmarried?"

"Yes, I would remain unmarried my lifetime, rather than ever see you suffer for my leaving home."

This was too much for Mrs. Morton, and

she sobbed as she placed her gentle hand upon the brow of Janet, saying, "My child, I thought you a trifle severe, but I suppose I deserved it. Now I discover you are the same devoted daughter you have always been, and it does me good to know of your strong attachment to one who would even die for you if needs be."

There was a deep silence for a few moments, when Janet looked into the face of her mother and said, "Forgive me."

"Can a mother forget her child?"

"No, mother," answered Janet, "nor will I ever forget you. I would rather say, 'Where thou goest I will go; where thou lodgest I will lodge, and where thou diest, there will I die, and naught but death shall separate us.' This, mother, is my spirit toward you, and although I hope there may never be occasion for such abiding presence, yet, should misfortune overtake you before I settle down in life in a home of my own, I will be willing to forego my own comforts for your happiness."

At this the clock struck twelve, and Janet retired for the night. Once more alone, she tried to solve some of the mysteries of life, which to her remained as yet unfolded. She had told Gordon to be good and to do good, but it seemed to her that she was doing very little herself. And yet, unknown

to herself, she was like leaven working in and through Gordon by her very influence and example, when they were together in the same city, for a good influence once gone forth, never dies. It lives on somewhere. Success upon success attended him, until at last, through good investments, he became a man of wealth, and was one of the most prominent and respected men in the city. He had done much for the good and betterment of society, and had endowed a Home for the fallen and needy.

One day, as he returned home early in the afternoon from the bank, he was surprised to see Helen Russel. Quickly rising from her chair at his entrance into the parlor, he shook hands very warmly with her, and with a welcome greeting he asked her to be seated and told her that he was very glad to see her.

"Well," said she, with a smile, "I have come to accept your offer."

"What is the offer you refer to?" asked Gordon, curiously.

"You will doubtless recall an evening in the past, when you so kindly offered yourself to me as a 'friend' whenever circumstances might require. The time has now arrived for me to take advantage of that kindness. After I left you and went home to my father, I was received most cordially and welcomed amid tears and embraces. My father saw

me when I was yet a distance from the house, and running out to meet me, he shouted with joy, and said, 'Thank God, she has come home at last!' I shall never forget that meeting, for I never before knew that my father so dearly loved me. I had often read of how that love overcomes hatred, and that forgiveness is greater than sin, but never was I so impressed with the truth of those words as when I was in the fond embrace of my father. Whatever wrong I did, he most graciously forgave me, and welcomed me back home as his own dear child."

"I am so glad," said Gordon, "that you were thus kindly welcomed home, for somehow I felt that your father would be glad to see you, and I am happy to know that I was not disappointed."

"No, Gordon, you were right in what you did, and I realize now the wisdom of your judgment. After the hearty welcome, therefore, I frankly told my father of my whole life since the day I left home, and how that God, my heavenly father, had welcomed me back as one of his own children."

"No doubt he was glad to hear that."

"Yes, Gordon, he seemed to listen to it with rather unusual interest."

"I should think any parent would, for even though he be indifferent himself to

such matters, yet he would want his children to do that which is right."

Helen sat for a moment in thought as if wondering whether or not she should tell one of her happy experiences. Then lifting up her eyes, she looked at Gordon, saying:

"I've had one very great pleasure since I saw you."

"What was that?"

"You know," said Helen, "that my father, when I left home, was a man of the world. He was not only careless in his own life, but never concerned himself about my spiritual welfare. When, therefore, he forgave me upon my return, I felt it my duty to remind him of the love of God for him. One evening as we were sitting in the parlor, where I had been playing and singing for him, I turned to him and said: 'Father, you are growing old, and God has been very good to you all these years. There is one thing now that I would ask of you.'

"My father looked at me a little surprised and asked to know what I wanted him to do. Then came the most difficult thing it seemed I had ever undertaken. I wanted to speak, and yet somehow I could not say the words. I paused for a moment and silently asked God to help me. Father noticed something was wrong and he again asked what I wanted. Then I picked up sufficient courage and said: 'Father, I want you to prom-

ise me you will never touch strong drink again.' The tears at once began to steal down his cheeks, and stepping up to me at the piano he took me by the hand and said: 'Helen, I will never touch another drop. Had I taken this stand long ago, you would not have been driven from home. I have regretted it a thousand times over, and I thank God you have come back. I will therefore not only stop drink, but to make amends for my wrong, I mean to live a very different life. I am truly sorry for my past actions, and if God forgives me, I will henceforth serve Him."

"How delighted you must have been."

"This, Gordon, was to me the happiest moment of my whole life, and for a few moments we sat and wept. Then father turned to me and asked me to pray. I did the best I could, and it seemed never before was I so filled with power from on high, for God put the words into my mouth, and when we arose, father took me by the hand and said, 'Helen, it is all right.' The next Sunday morning he asked me to go to church with him. That morning a number of persons connected themselves with the Church, and to my happy surprise my father had been to see the minister and had arranged to join the number. When the time came for them to go forward to the altar, father took me by the hand and asked

me to go with him. I walked up to the altar with him, and as the minister took him by the hand to welcome him into the Church, father looked him in the face and with tears rolling down his cheeks he pointed to me and said: 'She showed me the way.' I shall never forget that happy hour."

"That surely was a happy experience," said Gordon, as he quietly wiped a tear that had found its way down his cheek.

"Yes, Gordon, and I am doubly happy for my dear mother's sake, for father told me after his happy experience, that when mother died she asked him 'to be a good father to me and to keep me from bad company,' and father said to me, 'Helen, I have often recalled those last words of your mother. You were then only a small child, but I often felt I had neglected to do what I then promised her. Had I been true to my promise, I might to-day be in very different circumstances, but you see I have squandered much of my hard-earned money, and have helped to feed and clothe others instead of looking after my own, but the trouble with many like myself is we see our mistakes when it is too late.' But now, Gordon, that my father is living such a very different life, he is so much happier, and just before I left he told me that he was happier now with his poverty than he ever was with his wealth, for he is a different man, a good

man, a kind father. Since then, my home has been most happy. But, Gordon, my life is not what I want it to be. I feel as though I should be doing something more than what I have been, for I am not needed at home, and I believe God has called me to a work."

"Tell me something about your ambitions."

"Well, I see so much that needs attention and correction among mankind, and some one is needed for that work, in fact, many workmen are needed. It is not sufficient to walk along the great avenues and main streets of our large cities but step aside into some of the by-streets and alleys, and what sights appeal to the sympathies of humanity!"

"I am glad to know others notice so forcibly these sad conditions of society," said Gordon.

"One can't help but see these things," replied Helen, "only too frequently we close our eyes, as if thereby we may excuse ourselves from action."

"And yet we are responsible."

"Yes, Gordon, and unless as a people we are more aroused to a sense of our duty, our homes, our churches and our nation will be so honeycombed by these evil influences that all will fall from the starry heights of glory and fame, as now held by these powers, to conditions both alarming and appalling."

"It is unfortunate that more persons who have the time and ability do not give their services for such a noble work. And, indeed, many of the more wealthy could of their means render most efficient services for the betterment of society and the alleviating of the woes of humanity."

"That is just the very kind of work I wish to engage in, and my mission here to-day, Gordon, is to ask your help to send me to a good training school, where I may be educated as a deaconess."

"Helen, your appeal is a most worthy one, and your mission a blessing. Where such consecrated women go, there purity, charity and peace accompany them. They are loved and respected for their very virtue's sake, and they are truly unconscious of their power, and will not know until all things are revealed."

"I am glad, Gordon, you are so ready to encourage me."

"Helen, it is the noblest act of your life, and while you will meet with discouragements, yet the encouragements will so far overbalance them that you will never regret the step you are about to take. Picture yourself entering the sick room of a poor family. There before you lies a mother down with disease. Her children are all small, and she a widow. The cold hand of poverty has touched every article in the home, and there

is no income save from perhaps one of the little girls, who is working upon the smallest pittance of a salary. The children are neglected. The home is all in disorder, while the poor, sick mother lies there burning with a raging fever and no one to cool her fevered brow. The very sight of her children as they appear before her in their neglect, causes her grief, while she herself is constantly growing worse for want of attention. The thought of death and the little orphan children causes her heart to bleed, and the burning tears only aggravate the disease."

"How true to life," added Helen.

"You enter such a home as a nurse. Then the scene changes. First of all, the sick one is properly cared for and given her medicines at the proper time. Then the home is put in order and the children receive a mother's attention. Everything assumes a new aspect. It seems as if some angel had entered that home and scattered around sweet gifts from heaven. The mother soon rests better. Her fever is not so high. The flush upon the cheek gradually disappears. In a short time she is well again, and home is once more restored. You bid farewell to mother and children and start out upon another errand of mercy, and in the home from whence you will have thus departed, 'twill be as if an angel shook his wings."

"Gordon, I'm delighted to hear you speak so enthusiastically about the work I am about to enter upon, for I have carefully weighed the matter in all its bearings. I have considered its demands as well as its trials, but with all I believe I am called to the work."

"I need not ask you why you want to become a deaconess," said Gordon, "for your own earnestness tells me plainly the story. It is nothing more in you than the call of God to a noble work, and I can assure you that in me you will ever find a ready friend for such a calling. You may not know of it, but, Helen, I have endowed in this city a Home of the very order of which you speak, and after you shall have finished the necessary preparation for the work, I will see to it that the future opens before you a large field of labor, and since I have been so richly blessed in this world's goods, you need never want for the things needful to feed and clothe the body."

"Thank you very much," said Helen in a tone of deep gratitude. "I shall ever be indebted to you for your many acts of kindness and goodness to me; perhaps some day I may be able to show you the results of your practical charity, for yours has been a charity, practical both in word and deed, and you have never let your left hand know

what the right hand did. Such charity will some day bring you a blessing."

It was not long before Helen was furnished with the necessary letters of recommendation, together with the requisite funds for her calling in life. Her father was a man of very moderate circumstances, and as Gordon had offered most cheerfully his services whenever needed, Helen did not feel any reluctance in calling upon him for help, knowing full well his desire to do good.

After having received the proper training in the school for that purpose, Helen was accepted as a deaconess in the Home which had been established by Gordon. One of her first patients was Gordon's father, who had become so helpless that some one was needed to take the proper care of him.

Watching her self-sacrificing spirit and her great devotion to his father day after day, Gordon became greatly attached to her. One evening after his father had gone to sleep, he said: "Helen, you seemed to have put your whole soul into your work, so much so that I sometimes wonder if I did not make a mistake when I failed to avail myself of what appeared to be an opportunity, and one that I passed by, and I am inclined to believe that if you are so kind to my father, who is thus so helpless, you would have been still kinder to his son. How is this, am I right?"

Gordon had not heard from Janet for a number of years, and being captivated by Helen's attention to his sick father, he was naturally led on by this woman's devotion into deep waters of love. But Helen could never take advantage of one who had proved to be a friend, such as he had been to her.

Accordingly, she replied: "It is very kind of you to admit that you perhaps made a mistake then. But I have since learned that your course was the wisest, for now I sincerely believe God wanted me for this work. I have therefore taken a vow, and will ever keep it sacred. I have been strangely, almost mysteriously, led to the present calling of my life. I shall, therefore, try to be a second St. Catherine, for I made a promise to God never to wed, but to give Him my life's service in this work."

"You are right," said Gordon; "it was, perhaps, a momentary weakness on my part, and I hope you will never break your vow, but that you may be a great blessing to all mankind, as you are now to me, and especially to my dying father."

"That I may be all the more qualified for my work," said Helen, "I feel the need of going abroad for a time to take a thorough course of training, and, after returning, I shall be better able to render more efficient service. Beside, Gordon, who knows but in

the meantime I may be a blessing to some one, even in a far distant land. However, I shall only be too glad to serve you in the care of your dying father until the time when such service will no longer be required."

"It is very noble in you, Helen, to be willing to help me at a time when your services are so much needed, and I can assure you that whatever you may happen to need that lies in my power to give, shall most cheerfully be given you, and your proposed trip abroad shall be arranged according to your request."

THE REUNION

CHAPTER IV.

"Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the road,
Which, to discover, we must travel too.

"Ah, Love! could you and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
Would not we scatter it to bits—and then
Remould it nearer to the heart's desire?"

THESE words, uttered by Omar Khayyam, the great Persian poet of the eleventh century of the Christian era, express the experience of mankind at the present day. We know something of the past, a little of the present, but what do we know of the future? After all, it is a "road which to discover we must travel too."

"There was the door to which I found no key,
There was the veil through which I might not see;
Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
There was—and then no more of THEE and ME."

Life, indeed, is a journey from the cradle to the grave; and as two streams meet, and

running together for a distance, part again, only to meet long afterwards as one body of water, so it happens in life. Paths meet and run alongside each other for a short distance, then suddenly vanish, seemingly, into darkness, parting in opposite directions with "the veil through which mortal eye cannot see," yet these very paths often merge again in one great highway.

Janet and Gordon's lives had touched much as these paths, but, like them they had suddenly and abruptly parted in seemingly opposite directions, so that it was doubtful whether or not they would ever meet again.

Melville Ashton, Janet's suitor, had abandoned his project in despair, discovering that Janet was not a woman to marry merely for money, but rather for what a man really was in himself, and as he, Melville Ashton, possessed much wealth and very little character, he finally saw his mistake and retired from the field.

It was shortly after this that Janet's aunt in Paris was taken very ill, and Janet was sent by her parents to visit her. About this time Gordon's father died. This was a great blow to Gordon, for it took from him his best friend, and he felt his loss so keenly that he decided to take a trip abroad and try to forget some of his great sorrow.

Arranging his business so that it could be conducted by others for several months,

he started for London by way of Paris. After a brief stay in the latter city, Gordon resumed his journey. Taking a cab, he left the hotel for the morning train for London. As he was about to step aboard the train, he saw a man carrying baggage knock down a young woman who was in the act of stepping aboard the same train. Gordon quickly came to her assistance, and before any one else could offer help, he raised her to her feet. After ascertaining that she was not hurt in the least, he raised his hat, bowed, and was in the act of entering the car, when the lady, after recovering from her fright, said: "I thank you very much for your kindness."

Gordon was startled at the sound of the voice, in which there was something strangely familiar. Quickly turning around in the direction of the lady, two pairs of eyes met that, in the happy days of the past, often looked into each other.

"Oh, Janet, is that you?" exclaimed Gordon.

These words came to the ears of Janet with the sweet echo of past memories, and she, too, was surprised as she looked up and saw for the first time in seven years the face of her once devoted friend. In her joyful excitement in thus meeting him, she could hardly speak.

"Where are you going?" asked Gordon.

"I am returning home from a visit to my aunt."

"And where have you been all these years?"

"During the past seven years we have been living in London."

"How delightful," said Gordon, "for I am now on my way to the same place, and on our way across we shall be able to talk over old times."

Soon they were both seated in the same car and speeding onward to their destination. While they were enjoying the happiness of this joyful meeting, Janet said: "I am truly glad to see you, Gordon, and often I have been prompted to write to you, but I could not after my seemingly indifferent conduct at the mountains."

"How glad I should have been to have heard from you."

"But you know the cause," she continued. "As a daughter, I was obedient to my parents' wishes and to my own sorrow, I gave up one whom I most sincerely loved."

"Well, Janet, the joy at meeting is mutual, for although I have not seen you all these years, nevertheless, I have not forgotten you, but have been true to my first love, even though I was rejected."

"Why, Gordon, do I understand that you are not married?"

"No, Janet, I am not, and probably never

shall be. My father, whom you knew, has recently died."

"How sorry I feel for you in your bereavement, but you did well your part by your father, so that you need have no regrets."

"I have taken this voyage to try to forget, if I can, this great sorrow."

"I am so delighted that we happened to meet."

"Where are your parents living?" asked Gordon.

"We all live in London."

"And do you live with them?" asked Gordon, rather anxiously.

"Oh, yes, Gordon, I am still Janet Morton, your old friend, absent but not forgotten."

"I had supposed you were married long ago."

"No, those were only the plans of my parents and not the wishes of myself. But what have you been doing? You know I have always been interested in your welfare. I hope you did what I asked you when you left me at the mountains."

"To what do you specially refer?"

"Well, you know I told you to be good," answered Janet, with a look of confidence that told of her belief in his goodness.

"I have tried to do the best I knew how. Of course, it has not been much, and yet, what I did was done cheerfully."

"Even small service is true service while it lasts," replied Janet, "for the tiny daisy by the shadow that it casts protects the lingering dewdrop from the sun. And so perhaps you have done that which may prove a great blessing."

"Well, my service has been of the nature of the daisy of which you speak. In other words, it has been a small service," replied Gordon modestly.

"Pardon me, Gordon, for my curiosity, but you know when you left me at the mountains you said you were going to make some one happy, and I inferred from that remark you intended marrying, but you have just said you were not married. Who, then, is the person you made happy, or have you not fulfilled that part of your promise?"

"Janet, I did not intend mentioning, at least for the present, that part of my experience, for modesty would almost forbid any reference to the little good I may have done another. However, it may be of interest to you, who have been so interested in my welfare. By the way, Janet, I have a message for you," added Gordon, with a smile.

"A message for me?" asked Janet, in surprise. "Why, who has thought of me?"

"The message is from a young girl."

"From a young girl, why who can it be?"

"It is Helen Russel."

"Helen Russel? I can't recall having ever met with one by that name."

"No, Janet, you do not know her, but she knows of you, and asked me to give to you 'a pardoned sinner's love.'"

Janet thought for a moment, and unable to understand the meaning of the message, said: "You will have to explain more definitely, for, Gordon, you have ushered me into the land of mystery."

"The young woman I refer to was at one time unfortunate in life, but has been reclaimed."

"And is she the one you made happy?" asked Janet in a manner that told of her hope that Gordon had thus gone forth and been a blessing to others.

"She is," replied Gordon, "and when I told her of you and the good influence you had exerted over me, she told me, that should ever yours and my paths cross again, I should give to you the message of 'a pardoned sinner's love,' for she felt she owed much to you for the little I had done for her, since without your influence over me, I might not have been able to have been to her the blessing she claims I was."

"And you thought so kindly about me as to refer to what little I ever did for you?"

"Yes, Janet, for you did for me what no one else has ever done."

"Oh, Gordon, how delighted I am to know

that you have been so faithful to your promise, for I always believed you would prove successful in your undertaking. What has become of the young woman you referred to?"

"She is now a deaconess, and before my father's death she came and nursed him as if he had been her own. Since his death, she has gone abroad to receive a special course of instruction in her noble calling."

"And to think, I myself have been spending my time in society, doing good neither to myself nor to others. I feel now as if the past few years of my life have been wasted. When I think of what they might have been, and realize what they have been, it makes me feel very sad."

"Why so?"

"My parents wanted me to marry a very rich man, in fact a star in society, but while he had riches, he had only that and nothing more."

"And had riches no attraction for you?"

"No, Gordon, for he did not improve upon acquaintance."

Like many others, he introduced well. Such persons are like the meridian sun, brightest in their zenith, which is at the time of their introduction. Others are like the rising sun, who grow in splendor with acquaintance. Still there are others like

the setting sun, gradually losing their power with acquaintance.

It would be better, therefore, for such persons to quietly and even suddenly withdraw, than to allow themselves to become a sinking sun.

"The sudden hiding of the sun behind a cloud," added Janet, "often leaves more beautiful remembrances of its continuance in shining than when it goes down at night in its setting behind the western horizon. And so it is with some people I know; they have outshone their brilliancy, and are now existing in dark and gloomy backgrounds."

"That is rather a forcible manner of expressing your thoughts, Janet, but it is very unfortunate for the 'sinking sun' acquaintance. I truly hope that person is not myself."

"Far from it, Gordon, for I have always looked upon you as an exceptional character, and although you are not a man of wealth, yet there are other qualities in you that more than make up for riches. To me, Gordon, I am frank to admit that you have proved rather a 'rising sun,' which is constantly improving upon acquaintance."

These latter words were very amusing to Gordon, for in them he discovered that Janet was wholly ignorant of the wealth which he had amassed since their separation. But he thought he would now test

Janet's love for him by seeing whether or not she loved him for what he was, independent of money. It would be time later on to give her a surprise.

"Then, Janet, you have not lost all love for me, have you?"

"No, Gordon, true love never dies."

Too many persons regard admiration in the sense of love, but admiration is brittle and snaps unexpectedly. True love is of a tougher fibre, which can be strained and bruised and still be itself.

"I am glad to know that you have such a high conception of love, for the man that shall ever win such love will not be disappointed."

"Gordon, it may be that I expect too much, and perhaps my aspirations are too lofty, but I have an impulse, perhaps a very foolish one, but nevertheless true, of withholding my love until the day when I shall be sure that the affection of my heart shall be received by one who will cherish and reciprocate what is given."

"You are surely asking for nothing unreasonable," said Gordon.

"Otherwise, Gordon, I should ever be at unrest, only living in the hope of finding somewhere the wisdom that would bring wisdom out of chaos, and give ballast to a soul on a stormy sea."

Janet's thoughts would apparently aspire

to something higher and nobler than that which as yet she had been able to possess. Her very soul seemed:

Wilder, wilder, higher, flying,
Now exulting, and now dying,
  Passions rage and roll.
Rising, rising, fiercely, madly,
Sinking low, and moaning sadly,
  Frenzied human soul.

Wilder, wilder, higher, higher,
Even unto Heaven aspire,
  All, all to control.
Sink to earth in stupor's mire—
Quench in mud ambition's fire,
  Aching human soul.

Sadly, sadly, moaning, weeping,
Eager watch for hope now keeping,
  Hope for some high goal.
Humbly, humbly, lowly, creeping,
Till, ah, God, in silence sleeping,
  Weary human soul.

"Gordon," she continued, "since the day of our separation I have never ceased to feel an unrest and desire for my own soul's affinity, which has so strangely been denied me."

This seemed to Gordon his greatest opportunity, and lest it should pass by, never more to be repeated, he quickly seized it and looking into the face of Janet, he said:

"Have you never thought you would like to have a home of your own, where you might live and be happy with one whom

you could feel was nearer to you than a friend, or even a brother?"

"Yes, Gordon, most young women desire the lovely home of which you speak, but if she is wise she will be very careful to consider well before she takes that step, for many have embarked with sails of hope and expectation lifted high on the matrimonial sea, only to land at the harbor with broken masts, torn sails and wrecked hopes. Along the shores of matrimony are the ruins of many once promising lives; there they dolefully signal passers-by, bidding all to look well before they embark upon the matrimonial voyage, for it often proves a rough sea, and many go down ere they reach the end of the journey."

"But, Janet, are not such rather the exceptions?"

"Yes, and yet many of the vows made at the marriage altar often form the first shovel of dirt that covers a once promising life, the dirt of ingratitude and infidelity. I am not surprised, therefore, when I see some mothers weep at the marriage of their daughters, for some of them have themselves tasted of those bitter waters that they fear await their fair daughters. Many, indeed, have gone forth like beautiful Naomi of old, 'full' of expectation and hope, to return 'empty.'"

"However, Janet, you will have to admit

that there are very many men who have given a most delightful home to their wives."

"It is because of the sweetness of such homes, Gordon, that young women are inclined to think they would like very much to have, not a house, but a real home. Many people have houses, but neither brick, nor mortar, nor marble, nor furniture, can make a real home. A home is the result of two or more hearts that 'beat as one.' A girl may have a beautiful house and all the comforts that money could buy, but it takes more than these to make a home. I know many wives who do not have homes, even though they have husbands, and I know they would not object if they were single again. Some men seem to forget the little courtesies they gave their wives before marriage, and their wives would greatly enjoy these same little acts of love after marriage just as much as they did before."

"Janet, I am glad to hear you speak so sensibly, for too many women do not think seriously enough upon that which should be to them the most solemn and important step in their lives, for although a man myself, yet I am sorry to have to admit that there are many who are no credit to their sex, and it is only just and right that a good woman should think well before she decides to give up herself to another's keeping."

"It was because of such facts, Gordon, that one evening, not long since, while I was sitting in my room alone, there arose before me the picture of a most beautiful home, which I would have been almost tempted to accept. But, as I looked into the future, I saw upon the wall of time a dark picture. I seemed to see in the dim future an unexpected disappointment. I saw, as it were, an unfaithful husband, who caused his wife to shed many bitter tears, and to suffer many hours of sorrow by his cruel neglect of her. And in that same picture I saw that wife waiting uncomplainingly and patiently for his return, he being away to enjoy the so-called pleasures and follies of life, putting upon her the great burden of this life to bear all alone. In that picture I beheld him as he came home at last. Yes, he came, but alas! not as a loving husband, but a wreck of humanity. What tongue can tell the sufferings of such a poor wife, of having such a monster to endure, or what mind can conjure up the agony that such must endure, to help them bear up under those trying and terrible ordeals! After a time, he seems to come to himself, and when he sees her suffering, he puts his arms around his wife's neck, and with a kiss, tells her he is sorry for the grief he has caused her. But how sorry is he? He is not sorry enough to cease from his iniquity, for just about the

time when all appears to be moving along smoothly, and his wife's hopes are readjusted, he goes away and does the very same thing again. And so it was in my vision, year in and year out, until with a broken heart, I saw that unfortunate wife, pining away to an early grave and gladly awaiting the rest that would end all this trouble."

"No doubt that vision was true of some lives."

"But I looked off into the future again and saw yet another picture. I saw there a once attractive girl, who had at one time received all manner of favors and attentions, but now as she was growing old, there was a conspicuous absence of friends and admirers. Not only the absence of friends to shower upon the once attractive maiden tokens of love and affection, but that bitter absence of friends which does not allow the girl herself to bestow her affections upon some one whom she could love and call her own, a husband or even a little child. I saw her sitting in her lonely chamber that cold and dreary evening, with a look of despondency on her face, and an absence of that happy smile and expression that one sees in life which is worth the living. I saw her looking through the window into the night, and although the sky was cloudless, with bright, shining stars, hanging like diamond lamps from the infinite dome of heaven, yet

of all the myriads of eternal lights that shine clear and bright, none seemed to appear again as in the olden days. But saddest of all, in this very picture, I saw myself, Janet Morton, that sad mortal, looking out of that dreary window into that dark night, waiting for God to have mercy upon me, by calling me to His heavenly home."

"You would not, therefore, object to a good home if there were in it a good man?"

"No, Gordon, not if he were the right kind of a man."

Blushing is as natural with the innocent as smiles or laughter, and those who cannot blush have had their countenances polished by that artist of brass—worldliness—who, at any moment of our waking existence, is proffering his cold-hearted services.

It was, therefore, only natural that the blush of youth should steal across the face of Gordon at this event of his life, for it seemed to him above all others, the very moment of his life and he could not allow it to pass unemployed.

With an expression that told of a heart of love, Gordon looked into the face of Janet and said:

"Days are sweet when love is turning
Things of earth to brightest gold;
Days are sweet when souls are yearning
Heart to heart to fold and hold."

and so, Janet, these are moments to me sweeter than all earth-born ecstasy. Although you once refused my offer of love, I nevertheless am compelled to repeat to you the same question I asked you when we were together that summer in the mountains."

For a moment two pairs of eyes met, which told of two hearts that beat as one. As the playing upon the keys of one instrument is responded to by another instrument near-by, tuned in accord, so it seemed the yearnings of one soul found a hearty response in the yearnings of the other.

"Gordon," said Janet, "when you asked me before, I had to say you nay, but you know the reason why. Since then our separation has occasioned us varied experiences. But with all, it seems that God has so directed our steps that they should once more cross, and I now believe as I did long ago, that God intended our paths should merge into one."

"But are you willing to give yourself to one who may happen to have but little of this world's goods?"

"Yes, Gordon, I have refused to marry for money, but I will marry for love, and I love you for what you are in yourself, your own intrinsic worth."

Janet answered thus in seeming haste, but there was a time before when Gordon

had asked her the same question. At that time she asked herself a series of questions as regards certain things which she thought were required of a wife, and there and then she decided to be willing to carry out, as far as in her power, those very conditions, and become Gordon's wife, but her hopes and plans were frustrated by her parents, whom she felt she should then at that time obey. True, she had not seen him for a number of years, yet, the face is a great index to the character of a person, and his countenance assured her that he had been true to himself and his opportunities.

"The world may frown ever so darkly or prosperity smile ever so charmingly," Janet added, "yet you will forever hold a place in my confidence as well as in my affections. Thackeray says: 'Nature has written a letter of credit upon some men's faces, which is honored wherever presented.'"

"Since you have been so true to your first love, and since you are willing to marry me for what I am myself, I will now tell you, Janet, that since you saw me last, I have been greatly blessed and have amassed a very large fortune. I am now no longer 'the poor bank clerk,' as your father and mother called me, but because of your goodness to me and your influence for good, I have steadily pressed on until I have reached a place along the road to success

which will enable me to offer you a more than comfortable home, and my future devotion and love to you will prove my worthiness of your hand and heart."

"I now admire you all the more, Gordon, for not divulging your success to me before, for it only goes to prove more conclusively that you would win my hand and heart, not by temptations in worldly goods, but by standing firmly upon your own merits."

"Thank you, Janet, but I will return the compliment by saying I am glad you were willing to become my wife and marry me for love of myself, and not for the love of my wealth."

"Gordon, money may be a great convenience, and with it one can secure many comforts and luxuries, but what are all these without love? One cannot well love money in the true sense of love, for there is no sympathy or affection in either silver or gold. The miser may hug his money and pile it up around his sick couch, but from it he receives neither sympathy nor affection. Money is only an equivalent. Many people have money, and in their love for it, they seem to lose all that makes life worth the living—love and sympathy. I would rather live humbly with some one that I knew loved me and whom I could love, than dwell in a king's palace without that which is essential to make home happy—love."

"With such a spirit on your part, I know we shall be happy, for such marriages are heaven-born, and we may reasonably expect heaven's blessings."

"Speaking of that, Gordon, I have always believed that certain people are intended for each other, and when I look back into the past, recalling both your own and my experiences, it seems that a divine influence had been directing the affairs of our lives, and strangely, but no doubt divinely, our paths have crossed."

Time had passed and Janet and Gordon were now on the boat sailing along rapidly. The sail was exceptionally fine—

"With ships the sea was sprinkled far and nigh,
Like stars in heaven, and joyously it showed
Some lying fast at anchor in the road,
Some veering up and down, one knew not why."

They were nearing land, and off in the distance they could see the serried columns of white-capped rollers dash themselves to pieces against the white cliffs of old England. As they watched the waves chasing each other thus in apparent victory, they were reminded of Napoleon's army at Waterloo, which had wandered over Europe with banners of victory, dreaming of no force that could resist its master, until it finally, with uncontrolled madness, threw itself to death as well as to defeat.

So the great army of waves rolled on like monarchs of the sea, apparently invincible, but in their attack of the shore, they pounded themselves to spray.

No wonder that Janet and Gordon enjoyed watching this great battle between the land and the sea.

Just then, as if some unpleasant thing had occurred, Janet contracted her brow into a frown; a moment later an expression of seeming intense disgust passed over her face.

"What's wrong?" asked Gordon, in great surprise.

"I just saw Mr. Ashton."

"Who is Ashton?"

"At one time partly a friend, now only an acquaintance"

"Why, have you had a falling out?" asked Gordon, rather anxiously.

"No, not a quarrel, but a sort of agreement to be only passing acquaintances."

"Is he from London?"

"Yes, he is a resident of that city, although he frequently goes to Paris, and I suppose he is returning from there now."

Meantime Gordon got a glimpse of Mr. Ashton, and said:

"He looks something like the pictures one sees in the papers of the lords abroad."

"He calls himself one, but I never recognized him as such."

Just then Melville saw Janet and her friend, and although he had said he hoped never more to see her, nevertheless, now that he had seen her he could not refrain from speaking to her. A seeming irresistible power led him to her side.

"I believe he is actually coming to us," whispered Janet, while she blushed and bit her lips.

"Why, Miss Morton," said Mr. Ashton, "this is an unexpected pleasure! Think what I have missed all this time in not seeing you sooner!"

Janet felt somewhat indignant at first that he should presume to force his presence upon her, and especially just at that time, for it seemed to her he had done it partly for revenge. And yet, she must act the part of a lady. Accordingly, with a forced courtesy, she acknowledged Melville's greeting and introduced Mr. Ronaldson to him as her intimate friend, hoping thereby he might the better understand, and quietly withdraw. But this only incensed Melville all the more, and he showed his ugly disposition in every manner possible. First of all he showed his sarcasm toward Gordon by saying to him after the introduction:

"Mr. Ronaldson, I am happy at making your acquaintance. From what noble house are you descended?"

This incensed Janet more than ever, and

she looked at Gordon with a look that told of her disgust at Melville.

Gordon, however, was ready with an answer, and said, "From none whatever. My parents were only humble countrymen by birth, but they were honest and honorable, and I would not have exchanged them for any royal family."

This gentle rebuke to Melville caused a smile to steal across the countenance of Janet, and caused Gordon to feel that what he had said was approved by Janet.

"Oh, excuse me," said Melville, "I thought perhaps you were of the house of Stuarts, or Hapsburgs, or of the Bourbons."

Gordon at once saw the character of the man, and thinking the least said the best, did not make any further reply.

Now came his turn for Janet. Pulling a chair close by her, he slightly turned his back to Gordon and addressed himself solely to her.

"I was not myself the last time I saw you, Miss Morton," said he, "and I hope you will forget the unpleasant part of our conversation."

"You seemed your usual self," replied Janet, rather coldly.

Melville did not much like this sort of compliment, so he resolved if possible to annoy her.

"I'm sorry I did not know you were in

Paris, for it would have been a pleasure to me to have called on you."

Gordon was just a little surprised at this remark, for it seemed to him as if Melville yet claimed the friendship of Janet.

"Mr. Ashton," said Janet, "one would think you would not be inclined to call after our last parting, for you know we parted, not as friends, but as mere acquaintances."

Turning his chair a little more to one side, his back was now almost wholly toward Gordon, and looking into the face of Janet, he said, "You know the dances we've had together, and the many pleasant drives and suppers. How can you therefore be so indifferent to me now."

The very look on the face of Melville told of his hateful nature. He was conscious that Mr. Ronaldson was Janet's friend and he seemed eager if possible to throw a spark that might explode that friendship. He acted most discourteously toward Gordon and pretended a most friendly relation between himself and Janet.

"Referring to the dances," said Janet to Melville, "they are things of the past, and so far as drives and suppers are concerned, you will remember that they were very few; one drive and one supper with you—and then my mother was with us."

This seemed to brighten up Gordon's countenance, which for the time had seemed

just a little saddened, while the face of Melville turned a deep scarlet.

Just then the bell rang, and they discovered they were about to land. Melville excused himself, and was not seen thereafter.

Janet and Gordon stepped off the boat and soon they were on the train carrying them into London.

As they were riding along, Gordon said, "Janet, pardon me, for I do not wish to criticise an old acquaintance, but there is something in the face of Mr. Ashton that looks rather deceitful. In fact, as a banker, I should not like much dealing with him without positive assurance that all was right."

"I have always felt the same way," replied Janet, "and because of that very reason, I have cut his friendship, and in fact I never did feel friendly toward him, although I was much in his company."

"Perhaps you were placed there by your parents, if he is a lord?"

"Yes, Gordon, never because I cared for him."

"Is he still a friend of your parents?"

"Partly so, although I sometimes believe that my father himself had learned to mistrust him, for Mr. Ashton gambles, and father has always been opposed to making money in that way."

"He may well be, Janet, for such men

sooner or later not only lose all, but they often drag down with them their friends."

They had by this time reached the end of their journey, and arrived safely in London. At the station, there were awaiting her, both her father and mother, and in their great delight in welcoming her back home, they did not see Gordon; but Janet, as soon as the hearty greeting was over, turned and introduced him to her parents. Gordon shook hands very warmly with them, expressing great pleasure in meeting them again. He acted as if nothing disagreeable had ever occurred between them. He was about to take a cab for a hotel, after this most cordial greeting when, to his great surprise, Janet's father said, "Mr. Ronaldson, you must come with us to our hotel and be our guest." He could not well refuse this kind and pressing invitation, and, after thanking him for the same, he joined the happy company and soon there was gathered around the table a most happy circle.

Janet told her parents how she had been knocked down at the station by one of the hands, as he was hurriedly trying to load a car with baggage, and how Gordon came to her help, and of their mutual recognition.

As time flowed on, indirectly her parents were also made aware of the understanding between their daughter and Gordon as to their marriage, so when an opportunity

afforded at the table, Janet's father let Gordon understand that he was now his friend, and the mother, by way of excuse for her first refusal of her daughter to him, said, "You know, Gordon, such were moments when a mother feels greatly moved, for to hold her daughter in her arms as a child for the last time, bidding adieu to the pleasant pictures of the past, and sending her forth from the home of her parents into an untried home, a new home, is after all, a severe trial."

"Delay," replied Gordon, with a smile of appreciation, "often brings greater blessings in the end, and although at the time I keenly felt the refusal of your daughter, yet I am now more than ever convinced that you both meant it well, and the renewal of our friendship may only be for the better sealing of the same."

By this time supper was ended, and all retired to the parlor. Gordon could scarcely realize that all was not a dream, for but one day before all had been a mystery to him as regarded his future life. The day before he walked about the streets of Paris beholding the splendors of that great city, whose art graces the world. He had entered its galleries and admired the gems that hung upon the wall. He seemed to be listening to the voices of the great masters, as he beheld their works of art before him.

Their very souls were painted upon the canvas, and amid the enthusiasm of the occasion, he almost offered up a silent prayer that some of the works before him might have life to speak to him. Only one day, and yet the real living picture, the ideal of his life crossed his path, and that night in London he could sit by her very side and not only admire, but speak and be spoken to by the living picture of his soul's conception. A great city, too, was that in which he now found himself. Ah, yes, he had when yet a boy learned of it from history as one of the largest and richest of all cities. But now that fair city was especially dear to him.

"I am for America," said he, "but now I love London, for the very dream of my life now lives in London."

Gordon could thus well exclaim—

> "O the paradise of pleasure
> Whither souls ascend in love!
> Mingling rapture without measure,
> As they soar to heaven above.
> Stay, sweet moments; life is fleeter
> Than the streamlet rushing by;
> Stay, sweet moments; love is sweeter
> Than all earth-born ecstasy."

After chatting very pleasantly for a time, the conversation gradually confined itself to Janet, Gordon and Mrs. Morton. It gave Janet's father an opportunity to hurriedly glance over the evening papers. Often,

when all seems to be moving smoothly and brightly, an unexpected cloud arises and overshadows life's pathway. It was so that night, with that happy gathering, for, after reading for a few moments, Mr. Morton let fall the paper and exclaimed at the same time, "Oh, I am a ruined man! I have lost very heavily, for I see in the paper that this afternoon one of the large firms in which I have invested has failed."

His wife quickly picked up the paper. The large letters at the head of one of the columns told her only too plainly the sad story. She ran to Janet and threw her arms around her neck, saying between her sobs:

"Our all is gone; we shall be left almost penniless, for nearly all our fortune was invested in that one firm!"

Then she followed her husband out of the room. Janet was crushed at the news, and sobbed bitterly.

"Janet," said Gordon, "do not weep, for you shall never want."

"Ah, yes, Gordon, but this is an awful strain."

"I have had my dark hours and months, Janet, but time has been a wonderful revealer, and God has not deserted me, nor will He forget those that love Him. You know that even David once said: 'I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed

begging bread.' True, Janet, there may be days of denial, and yet, in some way provision is made."

"I could stand this loss but for my parents. I cannot think of leaving them thus penniless. I will stand by them in their older days, and if God gives me health, I will engage in some business to help earn for them a livelihood. In fact, Gordon, since we have lost all, I feel it my duty to release you from your engagement."

"Janet, you are a noble child to thus be concerned about your parents."

"It is only my duty to help care for those who so fondly cared for me."

"However, Janet, many daughters apparently forget their parents at a time when they most need kind consideration. Your lovely spirit therefore for your father and mother but reveals to me all the more your hidden value, and let me assure you, that instead of this unexpected misfortune severing my love for you, it but draws me all the closer. Besides, Janet, I have enough to care for your parents, and my home shall ever be theirs, if they will share it with me."

As Janet listened to these words of comfort, she suppressed her sobs and endeavored to keep back her tears. Looking up into the face of Gordon, she said:

"You have come into our midst as an angel of mercy."

Just then Janet's father and mother re-entered the parlor. The face of the father was a picture of sadness. His countenance showed that he was summoning up all the strength of his nature to suppress the hidden agony. Indeed, he sat like a general meditating over the reports of some great battle in which whole armies were swept away, for the effort of an entire lifetime had now passed away from before him like a flash of lightning.

Presently he spoke.

"I am sorry, Gordon, that you should be ushered into the very midst of our unexpected and overwhelming distress, for indeed, to me all hope has vanished, and I behold only darkness and despair before me. None but an old man knows what it is to toil hard all through life with the hope that in his older days he might be able to retire from the worries of business by having provided for his family. After one has toiled for a whole lifetime it should be the privilege of that one at least to rest in his old age. But to see at such a time all the earnings of a lifetime scattered like hoar frost before his own eyes, is almost too much for one like myself. Yesterday I was one to be envied; now I am miserable and forsaken, for I know that those who yesterday courted my presence, will to-morrow pass me by with a cold nod, and without even a word

of sympathy or a hand stretched forth to help me."

With these words, her father bowed his head, buried his face in his hands and sobbed.

"Ah, yes, life has sudden changes," said Mrs. Morton, "for a few moments ago all was joy, now smiles are changed to tears, and the place has become one of mourning. The attractive scenes of the past will henceforth only be those of association rather than of reality. One who treads alone some deserted banquet hall, is doubly filled with a sense of loneliness; all the light, beauty and fragrance of the brilliant surroundings have disappeared with the dying echoes of the laughter and music. And so, all that remains for us is but to cast a last, lingering look on that which shall become a mere remembrance—a page in the chapters of history."

Placing his chair between Janet's parents, Gordon sat down and took each by the hand, saying:

"While you are greatly distressed, and no doubt what you have said in regard to what people's attitude will now be toward you may be true, yet I wish to say to you both that you have at least one friend who will not desert you in your hour of need. I know there are those who profess to give one hand in friendship, while with the other

they are ready to riddle the pockets of their friends, nevertheless, you must not judge all by a very few. Janet and I have been speaking about your misfortunes, and we have partly solved the problem. I have a home which I now offer you. I am glad to be able to share part of it with you, for as you are aware, Janet and I expect to be married in the near future, and our home will ever be yours."

This was too much for the two old people, who, a few moments ago, knew not what would become of them. For a moment they remained speechless, then, looking affectionately in the face of Gordon, the mother said: "Gordon, has God sent you here in mercy to do good unto the disconsolate? It seems too good to be true. Are we dreaming, or are we really standing in the presence of one of God's ministering angels? I feel compelled to say that we are not worthy of all this."

"Don't forget," said Gordon, "that without your daughter I might to-day have been a vagabond on the street, a menace to society and a curse to myself. She is the one who led me on the road to honor and industry. She it was who pointed out to me the road travelling along which I have reached a place in life where I am proud to stand, and where I am thankful to be able to care, not only for your daughter, but also for

yourselves, and where we shall live as one family."

All this was very encouraging to Janet's parents, although they keenly felt the humiliation of losing all and being dependent upon another's generosity. Nevertheless, as they were growing old, they knew they had nothing to do but accept the generous offer.

Janet realized the situation even more than her parents. While looking forward to the near future, when she, as Gordon's wife, would be sharer of his home, yet a young woman never likes to feel that she has all to receive and nothing to give. To such there is a feeling of personal pride that is not very easy to overcome.

Gordon observed that Janet appeared to be more and more affected over the sad affair, but he did not know the great depth of her grief, nor of the threatening storm of sorrow that awaited him.

The worry occasioned by this trouble so affected Janet's nervous system, that she was soon prostrated upon a bed of sickness. As Gordon saw her day by day growing weaker and weaker, he dreaded the day when all that he loved in life that was worth the living for, might be snatched away from him.

One evening, as he sat by her bedside, his eyes filled with tears. Janet took him

by the hand and said: "Gordon, do not weep. If it is God's will that I should be taken, let us say, 'Thy will be done'."

"Janet, do not talk of dying, for you know I cannot give you up. Without you life would be miserable."

"But, Gordon, you know our wishes are not always granted, for sometimes we ask amiss, and so we must trust to the wisdom and love of God, who never makes a mistake. It is true that things are often very different from what we could have wished them, or from what we would have chosen, but we are not capable of judging what things are the best for us."

"But, Janet, before me lies the very pride of my life."

"Here lies also the will of God, and that will, Gordon, is perfect love. God has His own wise ends in all His dealings with us, and if we bear patiently that which He places upon us, we know there is a place of deliverance where the burden will roll from us; if not in this life, at least in the life beyond. Then, too, Gordon, like the wounded oyster, who lines his shell with pearl, so perhaps, by my illness, I shall make the dwelling I inhabit, the dwelling of the soul, more beautiful, purer and whiter."

"Janet, it seemed to me that you were purity itself before your illness, but since you speak of becoming by your sickness even

purer and brighter, it does seem that what you say is true, at least as regards myself; for indeed your sickness has opened up within me springs of loving-kindness of which I knew nothing before."

"I am glad you are reconciled to my condition."

"Not yet, wholly, Janet, for years ago I planted you in my heart as a blossom, and although the cold, unfeeling hand of fate has since settled upon it, and even now the cold hand of death would destroy that blossom, since developed into a most beautiful rose, yet, Janet, you are even dearer to me now than ever before."

"Perhaps present suffering has helped to endear me to you?"

By faith, Gordon saw the good and the blessing in what before had seemed to him the wreck of all his happiness.

"Truly," said he, "there are blessings in every dark providence which comes to God's children, for as He is our father, He no doubt does not mean to do us harm."

"No, Gordon, we are only made all the more beautiful in character, and are fashioned through suffering after the likeness of Him who is our true model."

As Gordon looked into her face amid her suffering, he beheld its peaceful look as if it were touched by the hand of God himself. There was much truth in what she had

said in regard to trials developing character, for while we behold the temple as it stands complete, we are apt to forget the quarry and forest from whence the stone and timbers came. The chips of the rock and the shavings of the timber had first to be removed from the material before the edifice could be properly erected; otherwise, when complete it would present an unfinished appearance.

Down here on earth, we are in the quarry of God from whence He is gathering His material for the spiritual temple, that house not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

"If, therefore," said Janet, "I am now being thus prepared for a place in that temple, I yield to the polishing tools in the hand of God, and say, 'Thy will be done,' for by yielding to God's will we may reasonably expect God's good will toward us. And you know, Gordon, that in the days gone by God's will has been best, and in the end all was well. Why not even now trust Him, and leave the result with Him?"

"But why does God thus chastise?"

"You must not confuse suffering with chastening, Gordon, for often suffering is but the love of God which comes to us like the refreshing shower from the dark cloud. Suffering is often God's gift to us, 'for unto you is given, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for his sake.' It is also writ-

ten that suffering is a result of godly living, 'Yea, and all that live godly shall suffer persecution.' And, too, we thus suffer that a reward may be brought to us. 'So that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.' And who knows, Gordon, but that in this affliction some unexpected blessing may be revealed that otherwise might forever have been concealed?"

"Janet, I surrender to His will, and yet I hope 'if it be possible, this cup may pass from me,' for how can I drink the cup of bitter waters and drain its awful dregs? I will try to be submissive and to see the wisdom in it all, yet, as I think of my hopes I confess I fail to see just why the rose that blooms in the garden of my soul should be thus exposed to the storm."

"That may all be so, Gordon, but the storm causes the oak to send its roots deeper down, entwining them about the rock at its base, so that the oak stands all the firmer for the storm."

The howling of the wind, the roar of the thunder, the flashing of the lightning, the dashing rain, all these disturbing elements of nature awaken the sleeper at night, causing him to wonder the meaning of all. But an April morning after such a storm reveals the meaning. In the yard in front of the house the peach trees covered with

blossoms explain the meaning of the wind and storm. So with many of the trials of life. They bring forth blossoms and precious fruit.

The lily is seemingly robbed of its beauty as it humbly droops its head beneath the fury of the storm, but when the rain has passed away, the head of the lily rises again bedecked with teardrops from on high.

So in our varied experiences in life, we are generally better for the experiences, and are often made more sympathetic towards others in their afflictions.

"I can appreciate all the more what you have done for that woman of whom you spoke," continued Janet, "for in helping her, you will thereby help to ease the suffering of many others to whom she may minister. Then, too, Gordon, in sickness one learns to appreciate kindness, and through that very woman for whom you seem to have done so much when all others forsook her, God may bring back to you a blessing, such as you will never forget."

Janet's mother then entered the room, and Gordon retired. The next day found Janet worse, and indeed there was much anxiety about her condition. A gloomy silence pervaded the home, while everything seemed wrapped within the dark curtain of sorrow.

At last the doctor appeared in the door-

way of the hall, where he was met by Janet's father. The two men stood still and talked. Then the doctor entered the sick chamber and sat by the bedside of Janet for a few moments, in very deep thought. The mother watched every movement of his face and detected his thoughts. She buried her face in her hands and sobbed.

"Mother," said a voice from the sick bed, "dearest mother, do not weep. Why should you weep when I am happy?"

The mother could not answer, but used all effort to suppress her tears.

The doctor carefully and thoughtfully watched his patient, and after asking a few questions, quietly withdrew from the room. He was met again in the hall by the father. Again they talked. . . . "Very ill," said the doctor, "very ill. . . . She may take a turn for the better . . . *but*——" and they parted.

Gordon was sitting near by and overheard the conversation. He hurried out the door and saw the doctor as he was about to leave.

"Doctor," said Gordon, "can nothing more be done for that young woman? She is my all, and if money will save her I will give all I have. If money can do anything, only you have to say the word, and I'll give my last dollar. Oh, doctor, can't something be done to save her?"

The doctor saw he was almost heart-

broken, yet so determined that he was inclined not only to listen to Gordon's plea, but also, if possible, suggest some possible relief.

"She is very ill," said the doctor, "and needs the very best care and treatment. Unless she is properly nursed, I feel all my efforts will be in vain. I would suggest, therefore, that you secure the services of the very best nurse, for her mother is perfctly exhausted, and is not capable of rendering the assistance necessary for her recovery. I would have suggested it before to them, only I knew of their misfortune, and did not wish to put them to more expense than necessary."

Without a moment's delay Gordon sent a messenger, and soon Janet was in the care of a skilled nurse.

For a time no one was allowed to see Janet but her mother and the physician, for the nurse knew what Janet needed most was perfect quiet and rest. For many days little or no information was carried from the sick room. Then came the change. The crisis had been reached and the change was for the better. She was now able to eat and sleep. Gradually the color came back to her cheek, while her eyes spoke of returning health.

A few more days and a very marked improvement in her condition was evident.

The gloomy silence which before had pervaded the long corridors as the doctor passed through them on his way to the bedside of his patient, was now dispersed. The room which had been kept darkened, was now entered by the servant, who stirred the dying embers, added fresh fuel, placed the lamps on the table, and restored the original charm of that once bright and cheerful room.

During all this time, Gordon had been denied seeing her, since she always appeared to be worse after his visits to her. He could not help giving vent to his feelings, which tended to excite her, and made her all the worse. But now that she was recovering and beginning to be herself again, Gordon was again allowed to see her. As he entered the room, the sight of his face animated with joy at once kindled her heart, drove the blood to her cheeks, and made her countenance beam with joy and her eyes glisten with delight. The change was like the shining forth of the sun from behind dark clouds.

Quickly stepping to her bedside and taking her hand, Gordon said: "Janet, I am glad to see you looking so much better."

"Yes, Gordon, I begin to feel like myself again."

"They tell me, Janet, you have been very

ill since I saw you. I have been so worried, and although I heard from you every day several times, yet all was so unsatisfactory."

"I feared you would, Gordon, and in truth I have been very ill. One night I alarmed the household in the middle of the night by having a nervous attack. Things seemed bad for several days afterward, then I began to improve rapidly."

"I am so thankful."

"Yes, Gordon, and I likewise, for God has always been so kind and good to me, giving me for which to be thankful, yet it seems as if during my illness so much genuine friendship and unadulterated love surrounded me on all sides, that my heart is full to overflowing."

"If prayers avail, then you have been remembered very freely."

"Why, Gordon, have you been praying for me?" asked Janet, in seeming great surprise, and yet in a manner that seemed to tell of great satisfaction.

"Janet, as you know, I have never before had very much faith in prayer. That was one of the things in which you and I often differed, for it seemed to me to be contrary to reason to think of prayer influencing God in His dealings with us. If He is so wise as we believe Him to be, will He change His course at our request? If He is so loving as we know Him to be, will He not do all

that we need without going to Him with our petitions? With such questions rising in my mind I had always before been troubled with difficulties and doubts about prayer. But, Janet, I now believe that God does answer prayer."

"Then, Gordon, there is already a blessing revealed because of my illness, and so, in due season we shall always reap if we faint not."

"Of course, Janet, while I now believe in prayer, nevertheless, I believe that God often answers prayer through human agencies. Prayer and medicine work well together, and often our own hands may bring an answer to our prayers. I began my prayer in the first place by praying God that an efficient nurse might be sent, for I felt that with such an one, together with God's own blessing, there would be a cure, and as I have been able to learn, you have been most carefully nursed."

"Gordon, you have the correct conception of prayer, for while God answers, yet we must do our part. It often behooves us 'to roll away the stone.' While God could have, had He seen proper, been able, of Himself, to save my life, yet, I believe that the attention given me has largely helped to restore my health, and I shall never forget that noble nurse, whom I believe God sent to save me from death."

"Then I owe much to that woman, for you know Janet you are all I have in this world."

"Gordon, if ever the woman whom you educated does for any one what Helen did for me, she will be an angel of mercy to many a suffering soul, for woman possesses peculiar gifts wherewith to comfort and relieve the sick and sorrowful. It is such women as these who quietly and unnoticed by the world, pass along the streets and alleys of our large cities administering to the needs of humanity."

"What a pleasure it would be to me, Janet, to ever hear she had given so great a blessing."

"You would truly have reason to be happy, Gordon, for I realize now, more than ever the blessing God will shower upon you in sending forth into the world a woman, who, like my Sister Helen, will cheer the discouraged souls and perhaps save their lives."

"Janet," interrupted Gordon, "you speak of her as Helen; is that her name?"

"Yes, we call her Sister Helen."

"How strange," replied Gordon, "that is the same as that of the woman I educated for a deaconess, and who is now somewhere over here gaining further knowledge in her calling."

Just at this moment the nurse entered the room, and for the first time Gordon saw her.

"Why, Helen, is that you!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, I am Helen," she replied, "and are you acquainted with this good woman whom I have been nursing? She reminds me much of the young lady of whom you used to speak to me. Surely, if your friend is as sweet as this lady, then I do not wonder that she carried away part of your heart."

"Helen, this is she of whom you speak, Janet Morton; the woman who made me what I am."

"And I may add," said Helen, "she has been indirectly instrumental in making me what I am."

"You are right," said Gordon.

"Are you the woman," asked Janet, "who sent, through Gordon to me, 'A forgiven sinner's love'?"

"Yes, I am that woman," said Helen.

"Gordon," said Janet, "I asked you shortly after our first acquaintance to use your gifts for wise purposes, and I can now say with the poet, concerning both your and my influence—

> "Long, long afterward in an oak,
> I found the arrow still unbroke,
> And the song, from beginning to end,
> I found again in the heart of a friend."

"Isn't it strange," mused Janet, "that Helen should be my nurse?"

"Yes, I was just wondering how all this happened, for I was not conscious of the fact that she was even in the city, and it is very singular that in sending for a nurse Helen should have been sent and not another. But, Janet, you know paths cross very mysteriously."

"And yet," interjected Helen, "it is not so strange, for you know we can never do good to others without doing good to ourselves. Not only do wrongdoers suffer in the end for their injury to others, but such as do good unto others are richly blessed and remembered for what they have done. The best interests and premiums are those paid to men and women whose lives are a blessing to others."

"That is true," replied Janet, "for doing good to others is but the casting forth upon the waters the bread that shall be gathered by and by. Although that bread, a word, a kind deed, may float on rough billows until apparently lost forever, yet either in this life or the next it will return to you. It has so proved in my own experience, for in doing good unto Gordon, he has done good unto another, and in turn that person has done good unto me, so that I am blessed, and the bread cast upon the waters has returned to me again. The eloquent Daniel Webster, in one of his masterly addresses, in which he spoke of influence, said, 'If we work on

marble, it will perish; if upon brass, time will efface it; if we rear temples, they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon immortal minds, if we imbue them with high principles, with love to God and their fellow men, we engrave upon those tablets something which no time can efface, but which will live to all eternity.' And a wiser than Webster has said, 'In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.'"

In a few weeks more Janet's health was fully restored, and once more the sun shone forth in the life of Gordon. Plans were now made for the return home, for Gordon felt the importance of returning at once to attend to his business duties; besides, he was anxious to settle down into what he felt to be the ideal life. In a short time Janet and Gordon were made man and wife, and they with Janet's parents were all happily settled in their new home.

Many indeed were the happy associations that rose up before them like living monuments. The Deaconess Home was filling a most worthy place in that city, while the "Rose Memorial" was proving a greater blessing every day of its existence. It was not much wonder that, in view of all the good that was being done there to both

yound and old, that Mr. Morton, the second Sunday after their return, spoke to Mrs. Morton as they were leaving the church, saying, "After all that we have seen here to-day, I am glad that Rose is in heaven."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Morton, "God has no doubt done all for the best, although at the time I failed to see it."

Gordon resumed his business at the bank, and each year added to his success and the general happiness of all.

One evening as Janet was looking over a London paper, she happened to think of Melville Ashton, wondering what had become of him. She had predicted a sad ending for him, having always looked upon him with suspicion.

Melville Ashton had made his boasts of going ahead and having a good time, regardless of all warnings. He had said he would "eat, drink and be merry," and take his chances for the future. It was, therefore, not surprising to Janet, to read a sensational account of his rascality and sad end. Ashton was a "society man," had money in abundance and at his free disposal. But the day came when he discovered the truth of Janet's words of warning to him. Wishing to see a little more of the world than what he found in his own country, he started upon a tour, and suddenly appeared in one of the large American cities. Stop-

ping at one of the finest hotels in the city, he kept a carriage at his command both day and night. His dinner parties were of the most elaborate character and theatre parties were arranged for almost every night in the week. Altogether he lived in an extravagant and costly manner, and was looked upon with envy, while at the same time he was being courted and fleeced by many who were seeking just such victims.

This kind of life cannot last long without bringing the one who indulges in such a career to ruin and bankruptcy. Accordingly, Melville had not only spent all of his own money, but he spent that which belonged to others. He forged checks on some of his acquaintances, and the money thus obtained he spent together with the rest. At last he began to be found out, and discovering this fact, left for parts unknown. But with all his best skill and efforts to escape the justice of the law, he was captured at last and held a prisoner. It was also discovered at this time, upon the confession of his own lips, that he had been the chief cause of the failure of the business firm in which Janet's father had invested and lost all of his money.

Living a life of "a man of the world," Melville Ashton had, even long before he left London, spent nearly all of his own money, and had gotten a friend of his to make a

heavy loan on the firm in which Janet's father had been one of the leading stockholders. The note was supposed to have been perfectly secure, but the failure to meet the same at maturity, together with heavy claims from other sources which were being pressed at the very time when the note was to have been paid, caused this firm to make an assignment.

In Ashton's arrest, he confessed to have been the sole cause of it. To the legal authorities he said, "Now that I am caught in my own trap, I mean to make a confession, for my conscience has tormented me. I was about to lose all I had, because of the 'high life' I was living, and being too proud to live on the level plain with other men of humbler means, I therefore selfishly used a friend of mine to wrong another, who had been a friend of mine also. But now it is all over, and I have lived to see the day when man must reap as he has sown, although at one time I never believed it, and thought I could cover up all my tracks in case anything were found out against me, or if there were danger of my falling into the clutches of the law."

In his confession of his crime Melville also added the saddest part of all, the chapter of his conduct to his own parents. Said he, "Sixty years ago my father and mother stood at the marriage altar full of vigor

and sturdy ambition. My father's strength made its impress upon the age in which he lived. My mother, a grand, noble woman, was his true helpmate, and together both came down with honor and success through the half century and more of time. Six months ago, my mother went away from the side of him whom she had so devotedly loved all those years, to her home above. I heard of her death, but at the time I was afraid to return home because of my past history. I appealed to my father for additional help which he kindly gave me, his only child. But once on the downward road, one knows not where he will end, and so I forged checks in my father's name, until to-day, he is penniless by the hand of an ingrate and disgraced son. Yes, he is dying, and no doubt, as in the case of my mother, I will not even see him buried. Surely, 'the way of the transgressor is hard,' and I would to God that every young man might profit from my own sad experience, and avoid evil associates and gambling."

This was the account that Janet read in the paper of Melville Ashton. Turning to her husband, she said: "Here is a story of the end of a man whom I counselled and warned, but who laughed at me, and wondered why I did not enjoy life, as he thought, like many others. He often

boasted to me of the good time he was having, but now, from the confession of his own lips, I learn that he was a most wretched traitor, one who pretended to have been such a true friend of my father's, and yet, he was the secret cause of all of our misfortunes."

Janet's parents were sitting near, and hearing these words her father quickly said: "Why, who is that man?"

"It is Melville Ashton," replied Janet, "for here in a London paper, which I have just been reading, I read of Melville's arrest and confession of his crime. He has now come to the end of his worldly career, and he will be compelled to spend the next period of his life behind prison bars, where God grant he may live to repent of all his wrongdoing and of the heavy cross that he has laid upon your shoulders, in robbing you of all your worldly possessions."

"And to think," said Janet's father, "that at one time your mother and I held that deceitful and vile serpent in our bosoms, believing him worthy even of our only daughter. Surely God has overruled all things most wisely, and, Gordon, my wife and I do must humbly thank God for the day when your and Janet's paths crossed. For in all these years of your happy married life, we discover that each day only

adds to the pleasure of our daughter and also to ourselves."

"Yes," added Janet's mother, "God has wisely overruled our once weak plans, and has shown us wherein we were wrong."

"And now comes my turn to speak," said Gordon, "I feel more than ever what I owe to my dear wife, for my home is a home in the truest sense of the term, and if it had not been for Janet's early interest in me on my own behalf, and her fidelity to me as a wife since our marriage, my life might have been like that of Melville Ashton's. God bless my beloved wife."

And Gordon might well speak thus, for he and Janet strove each to rival the other in making each other happy.

One night, after many years of married bliss, Gordon and Janet went for a summer's rest to the mountains, where once they had spent such happy days together. Strangely, too, they were assigned to the very room that Janet had then occupied. The past again rose up like the mountains before her. The same window, the same scene, and seemingly the same moonlight night. To Janet it was indeed inspiring, for her experience had proved to her that what she had predicted in that same room concerning her marriage with Gordon, although it had long been delayed, yet had in the end been fully realized. Drawing her chair closer to

the window, she once more looked out into the bright moonlight. The stars shone clear as on a winter's night, and gazing forth from her window, Janet realized the presence of the vast eternity that surrounds us all—that grand, that awful eternity to which we are all so strangely blinded—that pure eternity before which all narrow personality must fade away, into which the solemn soul feels itself spread far and wide, until lost in contemplation of the Infinite.

Amidst the ecstasies of the occasion thus presented by the heavens, Janet exclaimed: "O ye stars, beneath which the races of man have vanished—a mighty torrent which is yet to you as a dream of a day; ye everlasting stars! A broad, grand lesson you teach to the heart which throbs again in harmony with you, that heart, a small, small part of the universe, so terrible in its grandeur. O man, it is too much for thee! Scarce canst thou bear this vastness. And yet, what peace is like unto this breathed out by the stars—the 'peace of God that passeth all understanding'—the holy, silent, eternal message of the stars!"

PATHS THAT CROSS.

By Rev. L. M. Zimmerman, A. M., F. S. Sc.

TESTIMONIALS.

MISS CLARA BARTON, *President of the American National Red Cross.*

I have read "Paths that Cross" very carefully once, much of it a second time, and always with a thrill of gratitude that it was made to cross my path; that I had had the privilege, in these days of misleading literature, to read one book that from cover to cover contained nothing but chaste and pure thoughts, the only object of which was to lead the reader into better lines of thought and better, braver and more honest methods of action.

I would most earnestly wish that every young girl, and especially every young man, could carefully read "Paths that Cross."

Countess di Brazza, of Italy.

I have read the beautiful book, "Paths that Cross," with interest. The characters are pure and good, and I am sure that any one who reads the book and embraces the sentiments contained within it, will certainly be elevated. It is so delightfully illumined that there is pleasure even in touching it.

MRS. G. R. BENNETT, *President of the Home for Consumptives, Baltimore, Md.*

In "Paths that Cross" all that is pure and beautiful has been given us to adorn heart and home. The author has a faculty of entering into the lives and feelings of men and women that is conspicuously wanting in most writers.

JAMES S. FORSYTH, M. A., D. D., F. S. Sc., *President of the Society of Science, Letters and Art, of London.*

I do not think that I have ever read any work by man with greater interest than I have done "Paths that Cross," by the Rev. L. M. Zimmerman, M. A., F. S. Sc. It is a lovely book, and sweetly written. I consider it one of the best of the excellent writings of this worthy clergyman. The thoughts are true and beautiful, and beautiful because they are true. They are verily true to life. The book should be read, not only by every young girl and young man, but by every one, old and young. I must get some copies for my friends.

REV. GEORGE S. BARSOOM, *of Constantinople, Turkey (Armenian Lecturer).*

This precious book is both interesting and thrilling. It is the fruit of sanctified common sense, long experience and wide observation.

If our pen could become as fervent as fire and as fluent as the wave we could not write letters too warmly or too well of this book,

Buy it, and keep it with the Bible for perusal, for it will "Scatter its Sunshine all along the way up to the very Paths that Cross."

REV. M. VALENTINE, D. D., LL. D, *President of Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, Pa.*

I have read "Paths that Cross" with much pleasure. It is replete with excellent lessons which will be helpful to its readers.

REV. H. W. MCKNIGHT, D. D., LL. D., *President of Penna. College, Gettysburg, Pa.*

I have read with great interest and satisfaction "Paths that Cross," and pronounce it a most excellent book, well planned, well executed, and replete with pure sentiments and lessons of great moment. Such a book must prove helpful and ennobling to all who read it.

REV. G. U. WENNER, D. D., *New York City.*

Throughout the story one breathes the pure air of the mountains in which some of the scenes are laid. The miasma of modern fiction is not found here. The author has impressed his own earnest spirit on every line that he has written. May the wholesome sentiments of the book prove a blessing to all who read it.

REV. C. S. ALBERT, D. D., *Editor of the Lutheran Publication Society, Philadelphia, Pa.*

"Paths that Cross" is a book full of merit that will be helpful to young people especially. It deals with many questions that perplex and trouble them, and gives clear Christian advice. The story is well conceived and sustains interest throughout, whilst there are portions wrought out with power and beauty. We most heartily commend it.

REV. J. B. REMENSNYDER, D. D., *New York City.*

No agency in our day is more largely influencing public thought and morals, and this often most injuriously, than fiction.

I congratulate accordingly the author of "Paths that Cross" on his entrance upon this field of literature. The pure moral sense, religious spirit, poetic insight, a felicitous style which he here employs to set forth some of the most important lessons of life, cannot but be most helpful and formative of character.

REV. SYLVANUS STALL, D. D., *Editor of the Lutheran Observer.*

In "Paths that Cross" the author has had in view a purpose that is worthy of both the writer and the reader. His characters have character, and he deals with such questions of personal and social honor and purity as are fundamental.

The plot is well chosen and finely executed. The principles taught are correct, and the tone of the book will always benefit and bless the reader.

W. W. LOVEJOY, M. D., S. T. D., *Prof. of Hebrew and O. Test. Lit., Pacific Theological Seminary (Congregational), Oakland, Cal.*

If the moral tension of adolescence, as Pres. G. Stanley Hall says, is the great opportunity of the religious teacher; if growing mind in the expanding body must needs adjust itself to the enlarging world of moral claims, he is a benefactor who meets the need in a manner impressive and engaging, giving true guidance in an attractive form. This Rev. Mr. Zimmerman has done in "Paths that Cross."

REV. E. J. WOLF, D. D., *Professor of Church History and New Testament Exegesis in the Evangelical Lutheran Seminary, Gettysburg, Pa.*

I have read with much pleasure "Paths that Cross." A book characterized as this is by a lively imagination, by lofty and earnest thought and by a fluent style, is sure to be read by many with interest, and by not a few with profit.

REV. H. LOUIS BAUGHER, D. D., *Editor of the Lutheran World, York, Pa.*

In "Paths that Cross" woman's influence for good is set forth, and the consequences both of listening to and of rejecting her kindly suggestions are illustrated. The author shows that acquaintance with people's ways and needs that comes to a pastor in his official relations, and by this book would multiply his power for good.

REV. J. G. BUTLER, D. D., *Washington, D. C., Editor of the Lutheran Evangelist.*

Delighted with "Paths that Cross." You avoid the overdrawn pictures of so many authors, and give your readers a story true to nature, full of love, with the underlying foundation of sound morals and a sweet Christian spirit. Your readers will greatly enjoy this handsomely issued romance of love and marriage, and will gather from it the inspiration of truth and purity, of courage and faith. Hope it will have, as it deserves, a large sale.

REV. S. DOMER, D. D., *Washington, D. C.*

I have read "Paths that Cross" with special care and pleasure. It reads well, its tone is of the purest character, and cannot fail to please and bless wherever it shall find readers. It *will* find readers, and I most heartily recommend it to both old and young. The book is an honor to the head and heart of the author.

REV. J. A. CLUTZ, D. D., *President of Midland College, Atchison, Kansas.*

I have read "Paths that Cross" with much interest and pleasure. I regard it as a good book. We commend it to our young people, and also to parents, for its high and wholesome views, and especially for courtship and marriage.

REV. J. H. TURNER, *President of Maryland College for Young Ladies, Lutherville, Md.*

I have read "Paths that Cross" with pleasure. The story is well conceived and excellently told. The book discloses extensive research and observation on the part of the author. It deserves to be read, and the thoughtful reader will be rewarded.

REV. H. H. WEBER, *General Secretary of the Board of Church Extension of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States.*

I started to read "Paths that Cross" piecemeal, but found it so interesting and fascinating that I laid aside other work and kept on until I had finished it. It is attractively written, full of sound sense, and cannot but do much good to any who read it. All of its lessons are appropriate. I congratulate the author upon this great success. He should feel grateful for being the means of writing so instructive a book and one that cannot but make men better.

REV. LUTHER KUHLMAN, *Frederick, Md.*

"Paths that Cross" has in it more of good, wholesome sentiment on vital matters than a half dozen of the average popular novels. May it be widely read and do much good.

REV. CHARLES S. TRUMP, *Martinsburg, W. Va.*

"Paths that Cross." The inspiring truths set forth in this volume are needed in the Church of God. Home should teach these doctrines. The pulpit should proclaim and the Sunday School reiterate them; then would there be more Janets and Gordons.

GEORGE B. REYNOLDS, M. D., *Baltimore, Md.*

"Paths that Cross" gives strength to those who are tempted, and hope to those, alas! who have fallen. It is a pure romance, chaste in language and has a good moral. I congratulate the author on such a composition and predict for it success.

S. LOUIS ETTENHEIMER, *Rochester, N. Y.*

"Paths that Cross" has been carefully written. Its pages are full of deep thought and study. It must have consumed months of hard, steady work, conclusively showing that the author speaks from personal experience. If carefully read and re-read it is a masterpiece, and teaches multitudes of good lessons. May we hope to have many more such works by the same author.

The New York World.

This is a novel which "is specially intended as a powerful lesson for the young." Those who read the advance proofs of "Paths that Cross" praise it highly. One certifies that it is "chaste in language," another, that it is free from "the miasma of modern fiction," while another emphatically asserts that "it is a lovely book and sweetly written." To these commendations may be added the undeniable fact that it is admirably printed and illustrated, as all previous books of this author have been, and weighs more than any other book of the same size that has ever been issued from a press.

The Washington Evening Star.

"Paths that Cross" is an interesting story. The chapters are filled with excellent sentiments and lofty thoughts, while the story throughout is pure. The good effect of the work cannot well be overestimated.

The Berean Herald, Atlantic City, N. J.

"Paths that Cross" is well written and attractively presented. It is a healthful work.

The Daily Review, Reading, Pa.

"Paths that Cross" is truly an excellent work.

The Westminster Advocate.

"Paths that Cross" is a novel of the kind that is too rare is these days. That distortion of motherhood and parental affection which sacrifices a daughter's life and happiness upon the altar of a mean ambition, or a meaner avarice, is righteously and rigorously condemned. The thought throughout the work is pure and elevating, the language ornate and vigorous, and the sentiment pure and wholesome in the highest degree.

The Baltimore Sun.

"Paths that Cross" is an attractively bound and printed novel, written with a view of ennobling Christian marriage. It is, therefore, primarily a love story, wherein the heroine, Janet Morton, is the medium of much good advice to Gordon, the hero, who is poor but deserving. Janet has a wealthy suitor, favored by her father and mother; but the girl also has—as some other girls have had—a will of her own. Incidentally the Rev. Mr. Zimmerman introduces in behalf of Helen Russell the proper attitude of the Christian toward the fallen woman in some very outspoken interviews. In the circular accompanying the book it is commended to the public by many prominent ministers of the Lutheran Church, the author being a minister of that church well known in Baltimore.

The Baltimore American.

"Paths that Cross." The story is well conceived, and sustains interest throughout, while there are portions wrought out with ability and beauty.

The plot is well chosen and finely executed. Throughout the story the reader breathes the pure air of the mountains, in which some of the scenes are laid. The miasma of most modern fiction is not found in it. Woman's influence for good is set forth, and the consequences, both of listening to and rejecting her kindly suggestions are illustrated. The author shows an acquaintance with the ways and needs of the people, as they are found by a pastor in his official relations with them.

The Baltimore Morning Herald.

The story is a good one, with a strong religious vein woven throughout; is well put together, and will sustain interest to the end. The author shows in it that he has not only studied the problems which vex the human mind, but has found a solution for them. Many new and original ideas are expressed, and Rev. Mr. Zimmerman is to be congratulated at having produced such a worthy addition to good literature.

The Baltimore World.

"Paths that Cross" has a well conceived plot, which is excellently and interestingly carried out, and aside from the story it so cleverly tells, it teaches lessons of Christianity and morality by the way. "Paths that Cross" will be an acquisition to Sunday school and other libraries. It is handsomely bound in green cloth, with gold trimming.

The Baltimore News.

"Paths that Cross" is a wholesome romance.

The Baltimore Telegram.

"Paths that Cross" contains a plot absorbing and original. The personages seem almost like living ones, and the various situations throughout the unwinding of the story are thrilling and dramatic. *Janet Morton* is one of the most beautiful characters ever designed for a book. She has worthy companions who will be sure to win affection and admiration. There is an underplot of crime and sin which lends a fascination as well as an excellent coloring to the author's word painting. "Paths that Cross" will make a deep impression, and certainly reach a wide and popular place among the best class of readers.

Baltimore Life.

"I had rather praise it than to read it," said Dr. Johnson as he passed the volume back.

There are, too, the books we read but cannot praise.

Mr. Zimmerman's last book, "Paths that Cross," will be both read and praised.

Advice requires a skillful hand for successful administering; counsel is, too, palpably, what most are not looking for. Mr. Zimmerman voices through his characters wholesome and generous views. It is a helpful book, a "friendly" book. The reader puts it aside content that his hour has been well and pleasantly spent, his courage heightened, his hope of himself strengthened, his views of his neighbor and his life have been deepened and broadened by this straightforward, pure and strong story.

Mr. Zimmerman's style is vigorous; he states his case clearly and forcibly, with a smoothness and choice of words effective from its very simplicity and freedom from affectation or embellishment.

The Herald and Presbytery.

"Paths that Cross." This is a story, but it is very much more. The characters in the story are strong, and many of them are most admirable. One who reads the book must be made more thoughtful, and be led to deeper and more serious views of life and its responsibilities.

The Methodist Protestant.

"Paths that Cross" is a well conceived and healthful story. There is a study here of human character that is neither overdrawn for romantic effect, nor tame and commonplace to weary the reader. The moral tone of the book is superb, and may safely be put into the family or Sunday school.

The Baptist Evangel.

"Paths that Cross" is a conversational novel, well written and attractively presented. It is a healthful book, and is commended for its sound common sense. It is a safe and helpful book for young people.

The Midland Presbyterian.

In "Paths that Cross" a beautiful story is woven into a plot that cannot fail to impress the reader favorably. The novel is attractively written, and the ideas are peculiarly original. The volume is well bound and printed, and should be in every Sunday school and family library.

The Christian Herald.

A story of remarkable interest, and in which some of the leading truths of Christianity are excellently illustrated. This book will be read with interest by both old and young.